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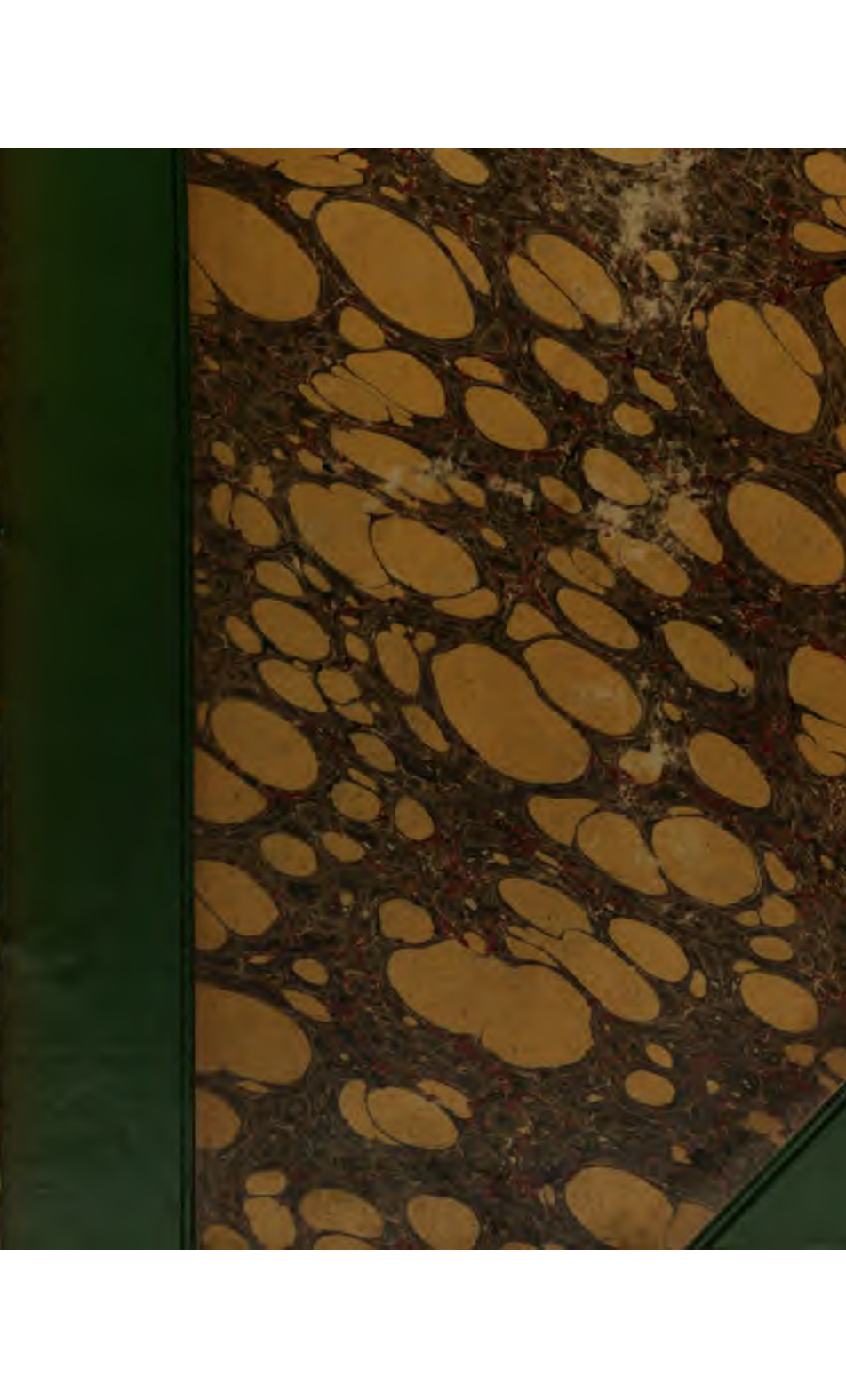

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THE

LIFE

OF

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

VOL. I.

ASHMOLEAN
OXFORD
MUSEUM

Sir Joshua Reynolds Knt.

Engraved by Robert Cooper from a Drawing by John Jackson.

Published June 24th 1813 by Henry Colburn Conduit Street London.

THE

LIFE

OF

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS,

LL.D. F.R.S. F.S.A. &c.

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

COMPRISING

Original Anecdotes

OF MANY DISTINGUISHED PERSONS,

HIS CONTEMPORARIES;

AND A

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF HIS DISCOURSES.

BY

JAMES NORTHCOTE, ESQ. R.A.

THE SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND AUGMENTED.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HENRY COLBURN, CONDUIT-STREET.

1819.

ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM
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J. Gillet, Printer, Crown Court, Fleet Street.

My presuming to write the Life of so illustrious a man as Sir Joshua Reynolds—a task which Burke declined and Malone has not performed—a work, also, so formidable in my own view of it—may require some apology; the truth is, that I was drawn into it by degrees, as we commonly are to all the sins we commit. I had at first written a short Memoir, at the earnest request of a friend, which was received with marks of approbation: I had also collected many little anecdotes, which I was told were worth preserving; and at length was persuaded to make the present attempt, or rather, I may say, pressed into the service.

Another motive to my undertaking this subject was, that several of the circumstances which I had to relate might help to

clear Sir Joshua, in respect to the unwarranted ideas, many persons have entertained, that he was not the author of his own Discourses, and that also in his youth he was particularly illiterate. That the latter is far from the truth may be seen in the letter from him to Lord E——, which is demonstrative of a delicate, elegant, grateful, and feeling mind; and is written with admirable simplicity of language.

Familiar letters by Sir Joshua are, however, very scarce: he was too busy and too wise to spend his time in an occupation which is more congenial to the idle and the vain, who are commonly very voluminous in their production of this article.

With respect to the anecdotes which I have inserted in these Memoirs, a few, I hope, may be gratifying to the Artist; others may amuse the leisure hours of my reader; some, I must acknowledge, are trifling, and may not do either: but I have given all I could recollect, and would not make myself the judge by omitting any, especially when I reflected, that minute particulars are frequently characteristic, and that trifles even are often amusing, when they relate to distinguished persons: therefore I felt unwil-

ling that any memorial, however slight, should be lost, as would inevitably happen, in a very few years.

It is my fixed opinion, that if ever there should appear in the world a Memoir of an Artist well given, it will be the production of an Artist: but as those rarely possess an eminent facility in literary composition, they have avoided the task; and the labour of writing the lives of Painters has been left to depend solely on the skill and ingenuity of men who knew but little concerning the subject they had undertaken, in consequence of which their works have been rendered useless and insipid.

I feel sensible that certain parts of these Memoirs may be considered tedious, some parts weak, and others not sufficiently connected with the original subject; but no man can be a competent judge of his own work: and I apprehend that, amongst a variety of readers, many will be pleased with what others will despise, and that one who presumes to give a public dinner must provide, as well as he is able, a dish for each particular palate; so that if I have given too much, it is at my own risk, and from an earnest desire to satisfy every one.

In respect to the volume on the whole, if I were to say, by way of excusing its imperfections, and to screen myself from severe censure, that it was composed in my idle hours, to relieve my mind when pressed by the difficulties of my profession, and therefore ought to be looked upon with a favourable eye, it would be asked, "Why I should, with any pretence to modesty or justice, suppose that the mere amusement of my idle hours can in any degree occupy the attention or contribute to the amusement of an enlightened public?" And if, on the other hand, I declare that it has cost me infinite pains and labour, and that I now humbly and respectfully offer it to the experienced world as the most perfect work I could produce, it may then be reasonably said that I ought to have performed my task much better, as the effect is by no means answerable to such labour.

Under these considerations, therefore, I shall say no more on this subject; but calmly submit the work to the animadversion of the public, and rest perfectly satisfied with their decision, as on the verdict of the purest jury, and one from whose judgment there can be no appeal.

PREFACE

To the Second Edition.

Of a man so various in his knowledge, so accomplished in his manners, and so eminent in his art, as Sir Joshua Reynolds, it can scarcely ever be possible to give an adequate biography. Had the Memoir been reserved for the nine years prescribed by the poet,* still would it have appeared before the public in an imperfect state: yet, I do not hesitate to confess, that if so much time for consideration and correction had been allowed, many parts might have been deemed proper to be omitted, and others more fully related, or more accurately arranged.

But the occasion on which the work first appeared was important, and, from the very short time between the conception and the

* Horace.

execution of the attempt, any very near approach to excellence ought not to have been expected, though perhaps my endeavours have gone so far beyond mediocrity, as not to be totally unworthy of him they were intended to celebrate.

Since the publication of the first edition many anecdotes have occurred to my recollection; and also, as it may naturally be supposed, the publication of the Memoirs of so distinguished a person, has led to my receiving, through the kindness of friends, details of many circumstances respecting him, with which I was not before acquainted.

These additions, together with my own memoranda, and which formed a supplement in the original work, I have now carefully incorporated in this new edition.

I shall now avail myself of this opportunity to notice a few observations that my friends have made, on the perusal of these Memoirs, as being the most important which have come to my knowledge.

That much new matter would be looked for, in such a work, is not unreasonable; yet if, in addition to a collection of hitherto unpublished notices, I am to be blamed for

having taken many circumstances, relative to Sir Joshua Reynolds, from the works of other writers, it should, at the same time, be remembered, that my intention was to give a life of him, as complete as was in my power; therefore, in omitting those particulars which I knew to be true, only because they had already been presented to the world, though scattered about in various publications, I must have rendered my own Memoir of him incomplete with respect to several important facts, which are very probably unknown to many of my readers; so that my work would have been merely an appendix to some lesser biographical sketch.

On this principle, I cannot help feeling that such facts will be considered as having an undoubted right to the place assigned them; and I should have been liable to reprehension, with stricter justice, for the omission of them.

The field of anecdote is an extensive one; yet, when we only glean, even after a plentiful harvest, our collection may be but scanty, though composed, perhaps, of some weighty ears: in fact, anecdotes are small characteristic narratives, which, though long

neglected or secreted, are always valuable, as being frequently more illustrative of the real dispositions of men than their actions of greater publicity, and therefore particularly requisite in biography.

To enter at large, indeed, into such particularity of circumstances, though highly useful, might be irksome to a philosopher: still it must be allowed, that curiosity, a weakness so incidental to mankind, ceases to be a weakness, when it occupies itself respecting persons who may deserve to attract the attention of posterity.

It is universally allowed, that no kind of reading is more beneficial than history, so it is likewise admitted, that there is no class of historical writing so applicable to common instruction as biography: for the lives of individuals are generally written more naturally, and with greater sincerity, than larger histories; nay, it may be advanced, that, in respect to benefit and application, we are much more interested in a knowledge of the lesser occurrences, even of great men's lives, than of the more exalted actions from whence they derive their glory, because it is in every one's power to imitate

them as men, though very few have opportunities of emulating them as heroes.

To know what we ought to pursue, and by what road that object may be attained, is, moreover, not the sole point which ought to occupy our attention: there is another not less necessary—the knowledge of what we ought to avoid; and on that principle it appears, that even the lives of bad men may become profitable examples, to point out the misery that is ever attendant on bad conduct.

The developement of weaknesses, however, only serves to entertain the malignant, except when the detail of those weaknesses may afford instruction, either from their fatal consequences, or when latent and accompanying virtues have tended to prevent the impending misfortune. But the most useful and valuable lessons are often contained in those private papers which eminent men leave behind them, and wherein their minds have thrown off all reserve:—a few of which description will be found in the course of this Second Edition.

PLATES

WHICH ILLUSTRATE THESE VOLUMES.

Portrait of Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS, *to face the title page*, vol. I.
Plympton School, Devonshire . . . . . page 15
Portrait of JAMES NORTHCOTE, *to face the title page*, vol. II.
Fac Simile of Sir Joshua's Hand-writing . . . . page 1
Weeping Muse, &c. . . . . „ 297

LIFE

OF

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

THE last century may be said to have formed an era in the progressive refinement of the British empire in all matters of taste; an era whence future historians will date our advancement in the arts, and our rivalry of the most polished nations.

In the early part of that century, however, so weak and puerile were the efforts of almost all our native professors, particularly in the *Art of Painting*, as to reflect equal disgrace on the age and nation. Philosophers, poets, statesmen, and warriors, of unquestionable eminence, were our own; but no Englishman had yet added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country, and which alone seemed wanting to fill up the measure of British fame. This remarkable deficiency in the efforts of genius in that department may, in a great degree, have arisen from the want of sufficient encouragement—a natural con-

sequence proceeding from the customs and manners of the preceding ages. What the fury of Zealots, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, had spared at the Reformation, was condemned by the Puritans; and the Arts, long disturbed by civil commotions, were, in a manner, expelled from Great Britain, or lay neglected in the sensual gallantry of the restored court of Charles the Second: nor were they revived by the party contentions that immediately followed, and wholly occupied the attention of all men, rendering them not only unfit to relish the Fine Arts, but also depriving them of leisure for their encouragement or protection.

In illustration of this, I may add the observation of an excellent author, that no set of men can have a due regard for the *Fine Arts* who are more enslaved by the pleasures arising from the grosser senses than charmed by those springing from, or connected with, reflection. The interests of intemperance and study are so opposite, that they cannot exist together in the same mind, or, at least, in such degree as to produce any advantages to the agent. When we indulge our grosser appetites beyond what we ought, we are dragged to contrition through the medium of anguish, and forego or violate that dignified calmness of the system which is only compatible with an honorable ambition—the sorceries of Circe, or the orgies of Bacchus, cannot administer or infuse efficient

inspiration to intellects debauched by unhallowed fervor; such as sink under their influence may, perhaps, feel contented with their ignorance of the value of superior merit, but will never exert their ability for, nor pant with the desire of being enviable, happy, or renowned.

The period, however, at length arrived in which taste was to have its sway; and to seize and improve the favorable opportunity, presented by the circumstances of the times to one possessed of superior talents and ardour of mind, was the fortunate lot of Sir Joshua Reynolds: yet, notwithstanding that he carried his art so high beyond our expectation, and has done so much, we cannot but lament that he was not more frequently called upon to exercise his great genius on subjects more suitable to so enlarged a mind.

It is worthy of remark, that the county of Devon has produced more painters than any other county in England; whilst, at the same time, it must be noticed, that till very lately there were fewer collections of pictures, of good ones at least, in that county, than in any other part of England of an equal space.

Of that county was Thomas Hudson, the best portrait painter, of his day, in the kingdom, and famous for being the master of Reynolds; also Francis Hayman, the first historical painter of his time; and Mr. Cosway, R. A., Mr. Humphry, R. A., Mr. Downman, Mr. Cross, all eminent in

their profession.* Of that county also was Sir Joshua Reynolds, eminent in the highest de-

* In addition to Devonshire artists, perhaps it may not be improper to notice Thomas Rennell, a scholar of Hudson, some years previous to the time of Sir Joshua, who was born of a good family, long settled in that county near Chudleigh, in the year 1718. After remaining some time at the grammar school of Exeter, he was put apprentice to Hudson, the painter, in London. How long he remained in that situation, I am not told; but, at his return into Devonshire, he settled at Exeter, with a wife and family. In process of time, he removed to Plymouth, where he resided many years, and drew several pictures, which were much admired in that neighbourhood, and gained the painter the patronage of the Duke and Duchess of Kingston, who endeavoured to draw him from his obscurity, by a promise of their house and interest in London. But this splendid offer was lost in an indolent mind; and from Plymouth, Rennell went to settle at Dartmouth, where he lived in great poverty several years. He has been known to lie in his bed for a week together, with no other subsistence than a cake and water. His art had only its turn with other amusements; and if a picture was completed in twelve months, it might be considered as very expeditious. No sooner was he in possession of a few pounds, than any stray object that presented itself was instantly bought, though, by so doing, the necessaries of food and clothing were to be sacrificed. About two years before his death, he experienced a comfortable asylum in the bounty of J. Seale, Esq. of Dartmouth; and the manner of his end evinced his serenity, if not his stoicism. Being asked whether his pains were not intense, he replied—"No; that they were such feelings as he could not describe, having never felt any thing of the kind before:" then wishing his friend a good night, turned his head aside and expired, October 19th, 1788.

The knowledge of Mr. Rennell was universal; for there was hardly a science that did not come within the sphere of his comprehension. As a painter, he is said to have possessed merit, particularly in the draperies of his portraits. In the neighbour-

gree; this illustrious painter, and distinguished ornament of the English nation, the subject of the following memoir, being born at Plympton, in Devonshire, on the 16th of July, 1723.* It has been noticed as not unworthy of record, that this event took place about three months before the death of Sir Godfrey Kneller, which happened on the 27th of the succeeding October, as if thus perpetuating the hereditary descent of the art; and preceding biographers are correct in stating that he was on every side of his genealogy connected with the clerical profession, as both his father and grandfather were in holy orders, besides having a paternal uncle, John, the elder brother of the family, who was a canon of St. Peter's, Exeter, and held a fellowship of the College at Eton. To

hood of Dartmouth are to be seen a few of his landscapes, but those very bad. He was very fond of chemistry, to which he devoted a considerable portion of his time. Most of his colours, which he prepared himself, went through that operation: and he is said to have discovered the art of fixing those which are the most fading. Of music he was passionately fond; and though he was not an excellent performer on any instrument, he composed some pieces which display genius. He also invented and constructed an instrument, containing sixty strings struck with a bow, moved by the foot, and modulated by keys. Some of his poetical pieces have been printed, but most of his papers were destroyed. Only one print has been taken from his works; to wit, a mezzotinto scraped by Fisher: it is from a portrait of the eminent Dr. John Huxham, M.D. of Plymouth, and the only portrait ever done of that physician.

* On a Thursday, about half an hour after nine o'clock in the morning.

this last, Exeter College, in Oxford, is much indebted for the bequest of a very valuable library, and for a considerable part of his fortune, of which it became possessed by his death in 1758. There is a mezzotinto print of him scraped by M'Ardell, from a portrait painted by his Nephew, now in Eton College. In addition to these, it is recorded that his maternal grandfather was in orders, who was married to the daughter of the Reverend Thomas Baker, a most eminent mathematician of the seventeenth century, and one to whom the Royal Society were, on several occasions, particularly indebted.

This gentleman was the son of Mr. James Baker of Hilton in Somersetshire, who lived in great respectability, and was steward for the extensive estates of the family of Strangeways in Dorsetshire. Thomas was born at Ilton in 1625, and at the age of fifteen entered a student of Magdalen, at Oxford, from whence he was five years afterwards elected scholar of Wadham College; in which situation, in the year 1645, he proved his loyalty by the performance of some little service for King Charles I. in the garrison of that city. In 1647 he was admitted A. B., but quitted the university without completing that degree by determination; and having taken orders, he was appointed Vicar of Bishop's Nymmet, in Dorsetshire, where he resided many years in studious retirement. Here he applied himself assiduously

to the study of mathematics, in which he made a most extraordinary progress; but was totally unknown and unvalued in his obscure neighbourhood until 1684, when he published his famous "Geometrical Key," in quarto, and in Latin and English. The Royal Society now became ambitious of possessing the result of the labours of his learned life; and having, in particular, but a short time before his death, sent him some difficult and abstruse mathematical queries, he returned an answer so extremely satisfactory, that they voted him a gold medal, with an inscription dictated by the deepest sense of respect. This venerable mathematician died in 1690, and was buried in his own church at Bishop's Nymmet.

1723.

JOSHUA REYNOLDS was the son of the Reverend Samuel Reynolds and Theophila his wife, whose maiden name was Potter; he was the seventh of eleven children (five of whom died in their infancy,)* and it has been said by Mr. Malone, that his father was prompted to give him his scriptural appellation, in hopes that one so singular, or at least so uncommon, might, at some future period of his

* Of that part of the family which died in infancy, one child, named Theophila, lost her life by falling out of a window from the arms of a careless nurse.

life, perhaps, be the means of attracting for him the patronage of some person with a similar christian name. The good man's intentions, if the circumstance be true, were indeed never literally fulfilled; but instead of that, had he lived, he might have seen his son become an honor to his country.

I do not know on what evidence Mr. Malone gives this account concerning the introduction of the name of Joshua into the family, but this I know, from undoubted authority, (having seen it in Sir Joshua's own hand-writing, and therefore shall insert it, as it serves to controvert this very improbable story, which otherwise would altogether be unworthy of notice,) that it is certain that Sir Joshua had an uncle, whose christian name was Joshua, who dwelt at Exeter, and also was his godfather, but not being present at the baptism of his nephew, was represented by a Mr. Aldwin; the other godfather being a Mr. Ivie; and that his godmother was his aunt Reynolds of Exeter, represented also by proxy by a Mrs. Darly. Mr. Malone is in general very correct, but not in the circumstance he has related as above. I hope to be excused in being thus minutely particular, as it serves to prove a fact.

The register of Plympton, however, has, by some negligence or inaccuracy, deprived him of this baptismal name; for in that record it appears that he was baptized on the 30th of July, and he

is styled "Joseph, son of Samuel Reynolds, clerk." It is difficult to account for this error in any other way than that which Mr. Malone has given, by supposing that the name was written originally on a slip of paper in an abbreviated form—"Jos. son of Samuel Reynolds," and was at a subsequent period entered erroneously by the clergyman or clerk of the parish.

The maintenance of this family of six children was a tax sufficiently heavy on the slender income of the father, who possessed no other resources than those which he derived from the living of Plympton, and the grammar school annexed to it; the whole amounting to a very small sum: for the church was only a Windsor curacy, and he was so ill calculated for the management of a school, that, notwithstanding his possessing a high character for learning, its number was, before his death, literally reduced to one solitary scholar. Yet this mortification, which might have overpowered a more irritable temper, the good old man bore without any dejection of spirits, and he continued as much as ever beloved and respected for the variety of his knowledge, his philanthropy, his innocence of heart, and simplicity of manners.

Young Reynolds is said to have been for some time instructed in the classics by his father, who was very assiduous in cultivating the minds of his children; but as it is known that the son did

not display any proofs of classical attainments in the earlier part of his life, it is most probable that the mass of general knowledge, by which he was at a later period so eminently distinguished, was the result of much studious application in his riper years. A correct classical scholar, however, he could not be considered in any part of his life. That he was what the world terms a genius, and of the first order, cannot be disputed. He possessed talents of the highest kind, which he brought into full and constant action by a laudable ambition, the ardent desire of acquiring eminence in the profession which he had adopted.

It has been ignorantly said that his father intended him for the church, and sent him to one of the universities, where he received the degree of Master of Arts. This erroneous notion probably arose from his subsequent honorary degree of LL. D. I have, however, heard him say that his father at first intended him for the practice of physic; and that, if such had been the event, he should have felt the same determination to become the most eminent physician, as he then felt to be the first painter of his age and country.* Indeed it was ever his decided opinion, that the supe-

* I have been informed, that, at the period when his father intended him for the practice of physic, he paid some attention to the study of anatomy, in order to qualify himself for the medical profession; but, if this were true, his works do not evince much progress in that science.

riority attainable in any pursuit whatever does not originate in an innate propensity of the mind to that pursuit in particular, but depends on the general strength of the intellect, and on the intense and constant application of that strength to a specific purpose. He regarded ambition as the *cause* of eminence, but accident as pointing out the *means*. It is true that, at an early period of his life, he made some trifling attempts in drawing from common prints, but this cannot be considered as any proof that his faculties were more particularly fitted for the study of the arts than for any other, although it has been brought forward as such. The same thing has been done by ten thousand boys before him, and will be done by thousands yet to come, without any of them ever becoming great artists. Such displays of childish ingenuity are the most common refuge of idleness, in order to escape from the labour of a loathsome task; they have the double recommendation, that they are not enjoined by command, and that they are more easily performed with credit to the young candidate for applause, as they are not likely to be scrutinized by any competent judge of their merits.

There is now one of these very early essays in the possession of the family, a perspective view of a book case, under which his father has written, "Done by Joshua out of pure idleness." It is on the back of a Latin exercise. No wonder it

should appear like idleness to his father; doing that which you are not required to do, and neglecting to do that which is considered as your duty, will of course look very like idleness, and partake of it in a certain degree. Notwithstanding those little checks from the father, he no doubt perceived that he had raised himself in the opinion of his parent, which gave him encouragement to go on; and it is allowed by his biographer, that his father, who was himself fond of drawings, and had a small collection of anatomical and other prints, was pleased with his son's efforts. We are also informed from the same authority, that his elder sisters had likewise a turn for the art before him, and that his first essays were made in copying several little sketches done by them; he afterwards copied various prints which he met with among his father's books, such as those in Dryden's edition of Plutarch's Lives, and became particularly fond of the amusement. But Jacob Catts' book of Emblems was his great resource, a book which his great grandmother by the father's side, a Dutchwoman, had brought with her when she quitted Holland.

1732.

ÆTAT. 8.

Young Reynolds had accidentally read the Jesuit's Perspective when he was not more than

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eight years old, a proof of his capacity and active curiosity. He attempted to apply the rules of that treatise in a drawing which he made of his father's school, a building well suited to his purpose, as it stood on pillars. On showing it to his father, who was merely a man of letters, it seemed to strike him with astonishment, and he exclaimed, "Now this exemplifies what the author of the 'Perspective' asserts in his preface,—that by observing the rules laid down in this book, a man may do wonders;—for this is wonderful."*

Notwithstanding his father's surprize at his first pictorial efforts, it does not appear that he contemplated any extraordinary consequences from them; but how gratifying would it have been to him had he lived to see the full accomplishment of his early wonder: for a man may perhaps have more pure enjoyment through an illustrious son, than if the fame were all his own; as persons are proud of illustrious ancestors, because they think themselves possessed of all their glory, and that without sharing in their disappointments, their fatigues, or their dangers, in acquiring those honors.

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* Of this school, an engraving accompanies this work, done from an original picture by Prout, a native of Devonshire. The school itself is one of the best in the county; it was erected in 1664, by Sir John Maynard, one of the trustees of Elize Hele, Esq., of Cornwood, near Plymouth, who gave 1500*l.* per annum to such uses.

The surprize he excited, and the praise he obtained, naturally inflamed his ambition to surmount greater difficulties in a field of knowledge in which, from the ignorance of those about him in the graphic art, he seemed to stand alone. From these attempts he proceeded to draw likenesses of the friends and relatives of his family with tolerable success. Richardson's Theory of Painting was now put into his hands, where he saw the enthusiastic raptures in which a great painter is described; and it is no wonder that he thought Raffaelle (as he himself has said) the most extraordinary man the world had ever produced. His mind thus stimulated by a high example, and constantly ruminating upon it, the thought of remaining in hopeless obscurity became insupportable to him. It was this feeling which more and more excited his efforts, and in the end produced those works which have established his reputation on a lasting basis.* It should be

* Dr. Johnson, in his Life of Cowley, says that, "in the windows of his mother's apartment, (Cowley's) lay Spenser's Fairy Queen, in which he very early took delight to read, till, by feeling the charms of verse, he became, as he relates, irrecoverably a poet. Such are the accidents which, sometimes remembered, and perhaps sometimes forgotten, produce that particular designation of mind, and propensity for some certain science or employment, which is commonly called genius. The true genius is a mind of large general powers, accidentally determined to some particular direction. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great painter of the present age, had the first fondness for his art excited by the perusal of Richardson's Treatise."

remembered, that at the time he read Richardson's Treatise, he could know nothing of Raffaelle but from the praise bestowed upon him; mere verbal criticism could evidently give him little insight into the particular beauties or genius of Raffaelle as a painter: but the enthusiastic admiration of the writer kindled a spark of the same generous flame in his own breast, and urged him to pursue the same path of glory, because it was the first that opened itself to his view.

I have ventured to deliver these opinions the more freely, because I know them to have been his own; and that, if they are not received as the truth, no one has ever yet been able to prove that they are false. Reynolds's notions on this subject have, notwithstanding, been sometimes mistaken, and his reasonings have been therefore charged with inconsistency. He never meant to deny the existence of genius, as this term denotes a greater degree of natural capacity in some minds than others; but he always contended strenuously against the vulgar and absurd interpretation of the word, which supposes that the same person may be a man of genius in one respect, but utterly unfit for, and almost an ideot in, every thing else, and that this singular and unaccountable faculty is a gift born with us, which does not need the assistance of pains or culture, time or accident, to improve and perfect it.

1741.

ÆTAT. 19.

As young Reynolds had shewn so early an inclination towards the arts, a neighbour and friend of the family (a Mr. Cranch) advised the father to send his son to London, to be placed under the tuition of Mr. Hudson, a well known painter of portraits, who was also a native of Devonshire. This advice was followed; and Hudson's consent being obtained, young Reynolds was sent to receive instruction from his preceptor: with this view he first visited the capital on the 14th of October, 1741, when he was not quite eighteen years of age; and on the 18th of that month, the day of St. Luke the patron of painters, was placed with his master.

In order to give the reader some idea of the state of the arts at that time, it must be observed that Hudson was then the greatest painter in England; and the qualification that enabled him to hold this decided pre-eminence, was the ability of producing a likeness with that kind of address which, by the vulgar, is considered as flattering to the person. But after having painted the head, Hudson's genius failed him, and he was obliged to apply to one Vanhaaken to put it on the shoulders and to finish the drapery, of both which he was himself totally incapable. Unluckily

Vanhaaken died, and for a time Hudson was driven almost to despair, and feared he must have quitted his lucrative employment: he was, however, fortunate enough to meet with another drapery painter, named Roth, who, though not so expert as the former, was yet sufficiently qualified to carry on the manufactory.

But Reynolds always through life considered himself as particularly indebted to Mr. Cranch for the good advice by which his father was persuaded to send him to the metropolis. That gentleman possessed a small independent fortune, and resided at the town of Plympton, living long enough to be pleased by the justification of his early opinions respecting Reynolds's future excellence; who, in grateful remembrance of that good opinion, many years afterwards had a silver cup made, for the purpose of presenting it to his judicious friend. However, before that could take place, Mr. Cranch's death prevented this act of gratitude; but I have often seen the cup at Sir Joshua's table.

That the state of the arts, at Reynolds's first arrival in London, was despicable, is allowed; though one or two exceptions were beginning to appear: and Hogarth seems to have been of opinion that Hudson was not the only painter of his time who was indebted to Vanhaaken for assistance in finishing portraits; for, on the death of this eminent drapery painter, he produced a ludicrous

caricature of Vanhaaken's funeral procession, containing a long train, composed of all the portrait painters of the metropolis as mourners, and overwhelmed with the deepest distress. The genius of Hogarth was too great, and his public employment too little, to require the assistance of a drapery painter, therefore he might safely point his satire at those who did.

Such were the barren sources of instruction, at the time when Reynolds first came to London to be inspired by the genius of Hudson! It should be remarked, however, of Hudson, that though not a good painter himself, yet out of his school were produced several very excellent ones, viz. Reynolds, Mortimer, and Wright of Derby, who at that time formed a matchless triumvirate.

Yet it appears that Hudson's instructions were evidently not of the first rate, nor his advice to his young pupil very judicious, when we find that, (probably from pure ignorance,) instead of directing him to study from the antique models, he recommended to him the careful copying of Guercino's drawings, thus trifling his time away; this instance serves to shew the deplorable state of the arts at that time in this country: however, the youthful and tractable pupil executed his task with such skill, that many of those early productions are now preserved in the cabinets of the curious in this kindom; most of which are actually considered as masterly originals by Guercino himself.

He could not escape, indeed, without the ordinary fate of excellence, that of exciting jealousy even in the breast of his maestr; who, as it is related, having seen a head, painted whilst he was yet a pupil, from an elderly female servant in the family, in which he discovered a taste superior to that of the painters of the day, foretold the future success of his pupil, but not without feeling, and afterwards displaying, in his behaviour towards his young rival, some strong symptoms of that ungenerous passion.

Soon after young Reynolds first came to London, he was sent by his master to make a purchase for him at a sale of pictures, and it being a collection of some consequence, the auction-room was uncommonly crowded. Reynolds was at the upper end of the room, near the auctioneer, when he perceived a considerable bustle at the farther part of the room, near the door, which he could not account for, and at first thought somebody had fainted, as the crowd and heat were so great. However he soon heard the name of "Mr. Pope, Mr. Pope," whispered from every mouth, for it was Mr. Pope himself who then entered the room. Immediately every person drew back to make a free passage for the distinguished poet, and all those on each side held out their hands for him to touch as he passed; Reynolds, although not in the front row, put out his hand also, under the arm of the person who stood before him, and Pope took

hold of his hand, as he likewise did to all as he passed. This was the only time that Reynolds ever saw that great moralist.—Pity that Pope had not known the future importance of the hand he then received in his own! *

The above anecdote I heard from Sir Joshua himself.

1743.

ÆTAT. 19.

REYNOLDS continued only two years with his master, in which time he made so rapid a progress, that the picture of his painting, already noticed, having been accidentally seen in Hudson's gallery, it obtained so universal a preference that the preceptor immediately grew doubly jealous of his pupil's excellence, and on that account they soon afterwards parted. Reynolds returned to Devonshire, where he is said, by his biographer, to have dissipated the three following years, making little effort and as little improvement, to the great disquiet of his conscience afterwards. Yet it is well known that, during the period here spoken of, he produced a great many portraits, particularly one

* Early anecdotes of Reynolds at that period, cannot be very numerous, or very interesting; but, in recording this respecting Pope, I have done it as an instance to shew the high respect that was paid to the poet whilst living, and also with what reverence young Reynolds beheld genius, whether poetical or graphic.

of a boy reading by a reflected light,* and several others which are undoubtedly very fine, as he himself acknowledged on seeing them at the distance of thirty years; when he lamented that in so great a length of time he had made so little progress in his art. If it be true, therefore, that he really lamented his loss of time in that interval, it arose most probably from a regret that he had not sooner established himself in London, which he always considered as the proper field for the display of talents: and it was, besides, his early and fixed opinion, which might add to his uneasiness on this subject, that if he did not prove himself the best painter of his time, when arrived at the age of thirty, he never should. At the period thus fixed upon by himself, there can be little doubt that he had, at least, surpassed all his competitors. At that interval of supposed negligence, I apprehend he was still making his observations on what he saw, and forming his taste; and although there were but few works of art, as I have before noticed, within his reach in that county, still there were the works of one artist, who, notwithstanding he was never known beyond the boundary of the county in which he lived and died, was yet a man of first rate abilities; and I have heard Reynolds himself

* This painting, fifty years afterwards, was sold by auction for thirty-five guineas. Some portraits of the noble family of Abercorn are also very correctly stated to have brought him into considerable notice at the above period.

speak of this painter's portraits, which are to be found only in Devonshire, with the highest respect: he not only much admired his talents as an artist, but in all his early practice evidently adopted his manner in regard to painting the head, and retained it in some degree ever after.

This painter was William Gandy of Exeter, whom I cannot but consider as an early master to Reynolds. The paintings of Gandy were, in all probability, the first good portraits that had come to his knowledge previous to his going to London; and he told me himself, that *he had seen* portraits by Gandy that were equal to those of Rembrandt, one, in particular, of an alderman of Exeter, which is placed in a public building in that city. I have also heard him repeat some observations of Gandy's that had been mentioned to him, and of which he approved; one in particular was, that a picture ought to have a richness in its texture, as if the colours had been composed of cream or cheese, and the reverse to a hard and husky or dry manner.*

1746.

ÆTAT. 22.

Mr. Reynolds and his two youngest unmarried sisters had now taken a house at the town of Ply-

* At the end of this Memoir will be found some biographical notices of William Gandy.

mouth Dock, in which he occupied the first floor, and painted various portraits, some of which evince great capacity, although necessarily embarrassed by the want of practice and executive power. That of himself from which the print was taken, accompanying this work, was executed at this period.

Reynolds during his residence at Plymouth Dock, though he met, even there, with considerable employment, seems not to have invariably exhibited striking symptoms of his future excellence; indeed, a few of his early productions are but indifferent, being carelessly drawn, and frequently in common place attitudes, like those of his old master Hudson, with one hand hid in the waistcoat, and the hat under the arm; a very favourite attitude with portrait painters, at that time, because particularly convenient to the artist, as by it he got rid of the tremendous difficulty of painting the hand. But one gentleman, whose portrait Reynolds painted, desired to have his hat on his head, in the picture, which was quickly finished, in a common place attitude, done without much study, and sent home; where, on inspection, it was soon discovered, that although this gentleman, in his portrait, had one hat upon his head, yet there was another under his arm. This picture I never saw; but I have heard the anecdote so often repeated, and from such authority, that I apprehend it to be a truth.

It was at this period that he painted a portrait of Miss Chudleigh, afterwards Duchess of Kingston, who was then on a visit at Saltram, near Plymouth, the seat of J. Parker, esq. where he executed the picture; and I have heard him say, that Miss Chudleigh, at that period, was eminently beautiful, and possessed the most delicate person he had ever seen, though afterwards she grew extremely large and coarse.

He now began to be employed, much to his satisfaction; as by a letter which, at the time, he sent to his father who resided at Plympton, he acquaints him with some degree of exultation, that he had painted the portrait of the greatest man in the place—and this was the commissioner of Plymouth Dock-yard.

Soon after this he lost his father, who died on Christmas-day, 1746. This gentleman, the Rev. Samuel Reynolds, as has been before observed, was eminent for his learning and moral character, to which he united such innocence of heart and simplicity of manners, that he has often been mentioned as another parson Adams. He was also what is called an absent man. The following instance was related by an intimate friend of his as occuring on a visit which the old gentleman once made him at his house, about three miles from Plympton, the place of his own residence.

When old Mr. Reynolds set out from his home on horse-back, he rode in a pair of gambados, that

is, a large pair of boots of a peculiar make, very heavy, and open at the outside, so as easily to admit the legs of the rider, and which were thus attached to the saddle. When the old gentleman arrived at his friend's house, it was observed to him that he had only one gambado: "Bless me!" said he, "it is very true, but I am sure that I had them both when I set out from home;" and so it proved to be, as the lost gambado was afterwards found on the road, having dropped from the saddle and his leg without his perceiving the loss of it. It has been also said, that he was somewhat remarkable for his taciturnity. His wife's name, as I have already mentioned, was Theophila, and thence, in order to avoid superfluous words and questions, whenever he would choose to drink tea or coffee, he told her, "When I say *The*, you must make tea; but when I say *Offy*, you must make coffee." This, however, if it did take place, must have been merely a jest upon his own harmless foible.

1749.

ÆTAT. 25.

It may seem unlikely that the early success of Reynolds should, in any measure, have been connected with the politics of the times; yet nothing is more true, for notwithstanding his own wishes to visit Italy, the mother and nurse of the arts, still that event might not so soon have taken place, had

it not been for some occurrences, which, being so considerably instrumental to the gratification of his desire, even thence possess sufficient importance to be recorded here, as well as from their relating to the earliest and most firm friend Mr. Reynolds ever had.

During his residence at Plymouth he first became known to the family of Mount Edgcumbe; who warmly patronized him, and not only employed him in his profession, but also strongly recommended him to the Honourable Augustus Keppel, then a captain in the navy, and afterwards Viscount Keppel.

This officer not having been paid off at the peace of Aix la Chapelle, which took place in 1749, was now about to be employed on a service in which all the characteristic qualities of his mind were, for the first time, eminently called forth. He had indeed long distinguished himself, as well by his spirited activity as by his agreeable and accommodating manners, and at the same time, although still a very young man, displaying the greatest firmness when either his own or his country's honour was at hazard.

At this period the long warfare, in which almost all Europe had been engaged, had given opportunities to the commanders of the various Barbary Corsairs to renew their depredations on the neighbouring states, and that too without paying attention to the protection of any flag whatsoever.

Some of these depredations had even been committed on the English flag, which were in some measure submitted to; for though these states were then well known to be neither powerful nor rich, rendering it thereby easy to compel a cessation of hostilities, or to purchase an alliance, yet it had been our policy to consider it as not very safe or prudent, either to shew to an indigent race of barbarous pirates that they had it in their power to exact tribute from a warlike nation like Great Britain, or to engage in war with a people who might, in some measure, be even protected by their very weakness,—a people upon whom no reprizals could be made, and whose armaments, such as they were, could be renewed, as often as they were annihilated, with much less inconvenience than we must have suffered in destroying them.

Under these circumstances the Corsairs continued, during the early part of 1749, to infest the seas and coasts of the Mediterranean; when the Pope* ordered out all his gallies under Monsieur de Bussy, to put a stop to their insults, if possible. The Genoese too, once so powerful as a maritime nation, were now actually unable to oppose those barbarians at sea, and were reduced to the prudential measure of merely placing guards along their coast, in order to prevent their landing, as they had done in several other places, committing the

* Benedict XIV, Lambertini.

greatest devastation. They were, at length, however, able to furnish three gallies, which they fitted out and sent to join a force collected at the particular instance of his Holiness, consisting of four gallies armed by himself, and two ships of war contributed by the Grand Master of Malta, with two xebecs and four large settees from some of the other powers.

Instead, however, of exerting themselves in defence of Christendom, this armament permitted eleven Algerine ships to alarm the whole coast of Naples, where they had proceeded in hopes of seizing the king whilst he was employed in pheasant-shooting in the island of Procida; a design, indeed, in which they were frustrated, though their insolence was now raised to such a pitch, through impunity, that they became totally regardless of all treaties, and pushed some of their cruizers into the Atlantic in order to capture British vessels.

On the 7th of May 1749, the Prince Frederick packet-boat arrived at Falmouth, having sailed from Lisbon for that port upwards of two months before, but had been captured by four Algerine Corsairs who had carried her into port, where they detained her twenty-three days, on pretence that the captain named in the commission was not on board, and that the money and jewels of which they plundered her, were the property of Jews. They treated the crew, however, civilly,

and did not rob them; and at length permitted the vessel to return home. At this period Mr. Keppel was fitting out at Plymouth Dock, in order to proceed to the Mediterranean station as commodore; and Mr. Reynolds gladly accepted of an earnest invitation to accompany him during part of the voyage.

Orders were instantly given by the Admiralty for fitting out a squadron, consisting of the Centurion, Assurance, Unicorn, and Sea-horse; in the first of which the Commodore was to hoist his broad pendant. It was intended also that this squadron should not only carry out presents for the Dey of Algiers, but that the commodore should also be empowered to demand restitution of the money plundered out of the Prince Frederic.

As the equipment of the squadron, however, and the preparations of the presents, were likely to occupy some time, the Commodore had orders to proceed immediately to sea in his own ship, the Centurion, and accordingly he sailed, accompanied by Mr. Reynolds, on the 11th of May, 1749.

After a passage rather tedious in point of time, they arrived at Lisbon on the 24th of that month, where our young painter saw several grand religious processions and other ceremonies novel to him, and which he notices in his memorandums. After a short stay at Lisbon, they proceeded to-

wards Gibraltar, where they arrived on the 9th of June, and after a few weeks got under weigh for Algiers, in order to execute the Commodore's commission. There they arrived on the 20th of July, and Mr. Reynolds accompanied the Commodore in his visit of state, when he had an opportunity of being introduced to the Dey in the usual form; but the most friendly assurances being held out, Commodore Keppel thought it unnecessary to make any longer stay, and immediately sailed for Port Mahon, in the island of Minorca, at which place Mr. Reynolds went on shore to live on the 23rd of August.

Here the friendship of the Commodore, as well as his own merit, soon introduced him to notice, and he was employed busily in painting the portraits of almost all the officers in the garrison and on the station, greatly to the improvement of his skill and fortune.

To General Blakeney, the governor, he was much indebted for polite attention; as that gentleman not only insisted on his being at no expense during his stay on the island for quarters, but also pressed him to a constant seat at his own table.

His stay at Port Mahon was however prolonged considerably beyond his original intention, by an unpleasant and indeed very dangerous accident; his horse having fallen down a precipice, by which his face was so much cut as to confine him to his room. At this time it was, I believe, that his lip

was so much bruised as to oblige him to have part of it cut off; from whence arose that apparent contraction which Mr. Edwards supposes to have been owing to his subsequent illness at Rome, which brought on his partial deafness.

His recovery now enabled him to pursue his original plan, and he for a time took leave of his friend, who had been literally so during the whole course of the voyage, treating him in all respects as a brother, affording him the liberal use of his cabin and library, and introducing him, when in port, to the first circles in which he associated.

1750.

ÆTAT. 26.

Before we follow Mr. Reynolds to Italy, it will not be irrelevant to notice a subsequent anecdote of his friend the Commodore, who, in the course of the ensuing year, found it necessary to return to Algiers, in consequence of the renewed depredations of the corsairs. Having proceeded with his squadron to that place, he anchored in the bay, directly opposite to, and within gun-shot of, the palace, and then went on shore, accompanied by his captain, and attended only by his barge's crew. On his arrival at the palace, he demanded an audience, and on his admission to the Divan, laid open his embassy, requiring, at the same time, in the name of his sovereign, ample

satisfaction for the various injuries done to the British nation.

Surprised at the boldness of his remonstrances, and enraged at his demands of justice, the Dey, despising his apparent youth, for he was then only four and twenty, exclaimed, that he wondered at the insolence of the King of Great Britain in sending him an insignificant beardless boy.

On this the youthful, but spirited, Commodore is said to have returned an answer in so determined and fearless a manner as to rouse all the passions of the tyrant,* who, unused to such language from the sycophants of his court, was so far enraged as to forget the law of nations in respect to embassadors, and actually ordered his mutes to advance with the bow-string, at the same time telling the Commodore that his life should answer for his audacity.

The Commodore listened to this menace with the utmost calmness; and being near to a window which looked out upon the bay, directed the attention of the African chief to the squadron there at anchor, telling him, that if it was his pleasure to put him to death, there were Englishmen enough on board to make a glorious funeral pile.

* The answer is said to be thus: "That had his Majesty the King of Great Britain estimated the degree of wisdom by the length of the beard, he would have sent him a goat as an embassador." Of the truth of this speech having been made, I am rather in doubt; but that he answered with great boldness is certain.

The Dey, having cooled a little at this hint, was wise enough to permit the Commodore to depart in safety, and also to make ample satisfaction for the damage already done, faithfully promising to abstain from violence in future.

To return to our subject—Mr. Reynolds now quitted Port Mahon, after a residence there of about two months, and proceeded for Leghorn, and from thence to Rome. When arrived in that garden of the world, that great temple of the arts, (where I have enjoyed so much pleasure, now almost fading from my memory,) his time was diligently and judiciously employed in such a manner as might have been expected from one of his talents and virtue. He contemplated, with unwearied attention and ardent zeal, the various beauties which marked the styles of different schools and different ages. He sought for truth, taste, and beauty, at the fountain head. It was with no common eye that he beheld the productions of the great masters. He copied and sketched, in the Vatican, such parts of the works of Raffaelle and Michael Angelo as he thought would be most conducive to his future excellence; and by his well-directed study acquired, whilst he contemplated the best works of the best masters, that grace of thinking to which he was principally indebted for his subsequent reputation as a portrait painter. In attending more particularly to this,

he avoided all engagements for copying works of art, for the various travellers at that time in Rome: knowing that kind of employment, as he afterwards said in a letter to Barry, to be totally useless—"Whilst I was at Rome, I was very little employed by them, and that little I always considered as so much time lost."

Mr. Reynolds was too much occupied in his studies to dedicate much time to epistolary correspondence; but I think it not improper to insert here the following letter, as the first sketch of one he sent to his friend and patron Lord E., written with admirable simplicity of language, and rendered interesting from the elegant, grateful, and feeling mind it displays, as well as shewing the absurdity of imputing some *others* to his pen.

"TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE LORD EDGCUMBE.

"MY LORD,

"I am now (thanks to your Lordship) at the height of my wishes, in the midst of the greatest works of art the world has produced. I had a very long passage, though a very pleasant one. I am at last in Rome, having seen many places and sights which I never thought of seeing. I have been at Lisbon, Cadiz, Gibraltar, Algiers, and Mahon. The Commodore staid at Lisbon a week, in which time there happened two of the greatest

sights that could be seen had he staid there a whole year—a bull feast, and the procession of *Corpus Christi*. Your Lordship will excuse me if I say, that from the kind treatment and great civilities I have received from the Commodore, I fear I have even laid your Lordship under obligations to him upon my account; since from nothing but your Lordship's recommendation I could possibly expect to meet with that polite behaviour with which I have always been treated: I had the use of his cabin and his study of books as if they had been my own; and when he went ashore, he generally took me with him; so that I not only had an opportunity of seeing a great deal, but I saw it with all the advantages as if I had travelled as his equal. At Cadiz I saw another bull feast. I ask your Lordship's pardon for being guilty of that usual piece of ill manners in speaking so much of myself; I should not have committed it after such favours. Impute my not writing to the true reason: I thought it impertinent to write to your Lordship without a proper reason; to let you know where I am, if your Lordship should have any commands here that I am capable of executing. Since I have been in Rome, I have been looking about the palaces for a fit picture of which I might take a copy to present your Lordship with; though it would have been much more genteel to have sent the picture without any previous intimation of it. Any one you choose,

the larger the better, as it will have a more grand effect when hung up, and a kind of painting I like more than little. Though it will be too great a presumption to expect it, I must needs own I most impatiently wait for this order from your Lordship.

"I am, &c. &c.

"JOSHUA REYNOLDS."

Of other events, previous to his arrival at Rome, I have nothing to add; but, as a proof of his diligence whilst at that capital of the arts, I cannot omit giving a few of his observations, which I have seen in his hand-writing, apparently made on the spot, as remarks to refresh his memory, and promote improvement in his future practice: they may therefore be interesting to young artists.

He says—"The Leda, in the Colonna Palace, by Corregio, is dead coloured white, and black or ultramarine in the shadows; and over that is scumbled, thinly and smooth, a warmer tint, I believe caput mortuum. The lights are mellow, the shadows bluish, but mellow. The picture is painted on a pannel, in a broad and large manner, but finished like an enamel; the shadows harmonize and are lost in the ground.

"The Ecce Homo of Corregio, in the same palace. The shadows are entirely lost in the ground; perhaps more so by time than they were at first.

"The Adonis of Titian, in the Colonna Palace, is dead coloured white, with the muscles marked bold: the second painting, he scumbled a light colour over it: the lights a mellow flesh colour; the shadows in the light parts of a faint purple hue; at least they were so at first. That purple hue seems to be occasioned by blackish shadows under, and the colour scumbled over them.

"I copied the Titian in the Colonna collection with white, umber, minio, cinnabar, black; the shadows thin of colour.

"In respect to painting the flesh tint, after it has been finished with very strong colours, such as ultramarine and carmine, pass white over it, very, very thin with oil. I believe it will have a wonderful effect.

"Or paint the carnation too red, and then scumble it over with white and black."

Then, he adds, "Dead colour with white and black only; at the second sitting, carnation. (To wit, the Barocci in the palace Albani, and Corregio in the Pamphili.)

"Poussin's landscapes, in the Verospi palace, are painted on a dark ground, made of Indian red and black. The same ground might do for all other subjects as well as landscapes.

"Make a finished sketch of every portrait you intend to paint, and by the help of that dispose your living model: then finish at the first time on a ground made of Indian red and black."

It may be seen by those various schemes, to which Reynolds had recourse, how eager he was in the pursuit of excellence, and they may serve as a good example to beginners: again he remarks, that "all the shadows in the works of the Carracci, Guercino, as well as the Venetian school, are made with little colour, but much oil: the Venetians' seem to be made only of a drying oil, composed of red lead and oil.

"In comparison with Titian and Paul Veronese, all the other Venetian masters appear hard; they have, in a degree, the manner of Rembrandt; all mezzotinto, occasioned by scumbling over their pictures with some dark oil or colour.*

"After a strict examination of the best pictures, the benefit to be derived from them, is to draw such conclusions as may serve in future as fixed rules of practice; taking care not to be amused with trifles, but to learn to regard the excellencies chiefly.

"There are some artists who are very diligent in examining pictures, and yet are not at all advanced in their judgment; although they can remember the exact colour of every figure, &c. in the picture: but not reflecting deeply on what they have seen, or making observations to themselves, they

* Titian, Paul Veronese, Tintoretto, Rubens, and Vandyke, have painted drapery admirably; and indeed the Lombard school have excelled in that and colouring, as the Romans have in design and nudity.

are not at all improved by the crowd of particulars that swim on the surface of their brains: as nothing enters deep enough into their minds to do them benefit through digestion.

"A painter should form his rules from pictures, rather than from books or precepts; this is having information at the first hand—at the fountain head. Rules were first made from pictures, not pictures from rules. The first compilers of rules for painting were in the situation in which it is most desirable a student should be. Thus every picture an artist sees, whether the most excellent or most ordinary, he should consider from whence that fine effect, or that ill effect, proceeds; and then there is no picture, ever so indifferent, but he may look at to his profit.

"The manner of the English travellers in general, and of those who most pique themselves on studying Vertu, is, that instead of examining the beauties of those works of fame, and why they are esteemed, they only enquire the subject of the picture and the name of the painter, the history of a statue, and where it was found, and write that down. Some Englishmen, while I was in the Vatican, came there, and spent above six hours in writing down whatever the antiquary dictated to them; they scarcely ever looked at the paintings the whole time."

He also made the following remarks on the character given of Apelles:—

"It is a matter of dispute among painters, whether Apelles would be esteemed as a great painter were he now alive; the very argument I have heard urged against it is what persuades me he was a good painter; to wit, that he made use of but four colours.* A remark made by Pliny is, that he polished away, or varnished over his pictures, to take off their glaring effect, and to deaden the tints; but Pliny does not speak on this point like a painter: he observed, that the pictures of Apelles had not that raw and gaudy colouring like those of his cotemporaries, and therefore imagined it was occasioned by a varnish; but it was from his judicious breaking those colours to the standard of nature.

"The ancient painters, I am fully persuaded, by many circumstances in the accounts given of them, painted in the great and true style: of this, the following anecdote, mentioned by Pliny, is a considerable confirmation.

"A painter had executed a picture which he valued for what is alone truly valuable in painting, that is, character and expression. On its being exposed in public, he was mortified to find, amongst other commendations bestowed upon this picture, a partridge admired that he had painted in a corner of the picture, that it was so natural it looked to be alive—he defaced it entirely.

* It was always Reynolds's advice to his scholars to use as few colours as possible, as the only means of being most secure from becoming heavy or dirty in colouring.

"The Italians, at present, in their historical pictures, do not attempt to paint the drapery to appear natural; I believe for no other reason than because their masters before them did not; for if they were guided by the same principle that influenced their great predecessors, they would likewise avoid the glaring colouring that at present they adopt, and attend more to a grand simplicity in all the other branches of the art.

"When a true judge of art is wrapt in admiration on the intellectual excellencies of a picture, it is with pain that he hears a tame remark on the colouring, handling, &c. When, like St. Paul, he is by enthusiasm lifted up (if I may so say) to the third heaven, he is too high to observe the inferior parts—he gazes only on the whole together.

"Suppose a person, while he is contemplating a capital picture by Raffaelle, or the Carracci, whilst he is wrapt in wonder at the sight of St. Paul preaching at Athens, and the various dispositions of his audience, or is struck with the distress of the mother in the Death of the Innocents, or with tears in his eyes beholds the dead Christ of Carracci, would it not offend him to have his attention called off to observe a piece of drapery in the picture naturally represented?

"Raffaelle had the true spirit and fire of his art; all his figures seem to be really and unaffectedly intently occupied according to their intended destinations. This is the proper spirit of

Raffaelle; instead of which, we find in most other painters, ridiculous contortions of body, actions that we never saw in nature, that, as Shakespeare humorously expresses it, 'One would think that some of Nature's journeymen had made them, they imitate humanity so abominably.'

"We find Raffaelle, in his works, sometimes possessed as it were with the very soul and spirit of Michael Angelo, and perceive that it is from him he received his inspiration; witness his God the Father dividing Light from Darkness, and Elias lifted up to Heaven. Raffaelle despised himself when he saw the Capella Sistina of Michael Angelo, and resolved to alter his own style entirely; and there is as great a difference between the Heliodorus and his other paintings in the Vatican, as there is between the Greek and the Roman sculpture.

"Sometimes a painter, by seeking for attitudes too much, becomes cold and insipid. This is generally the case with those who would have every figure a fine action; they lose sight of nature, and become uninteresting and cold.

"Another general fault is that which the French are commonly guilty of, seeking after what they call *spirit and fire*, and thus outstrip the modesty of nature, when their subject requires no such fire, or perhaps quite the contrary; however, they learnt it of him whom they esteem as perfection itself—that was their master!"

I cannot agree altogether with Reynolds in loading the fame of Raffaelle with so enormous a debt to Michael Angelo. Raffaelle improved himself very much by seeing the works of Leonardo da Vinci and Fra. Bartolomeo; but the true attributes of Raffaelle, and by which he gains his highest fame, are wholly his own; and had he possessed nothing more than what he gained from either Leonardo da Vinci, Fra. Bartolomeo, or Michael Angelo, we should not at this time have held his great name in reverence.

Of the portrait of Pope Innocent the Tenth in the Pamphili palace at Rome, painted by Velasquez, he used to say, that in his opinion it was the finest portrait in the world.

There is now in Rome an extraordinary fine portrait of Reynolds, painted by himself when in his studies in that city, and left by him in the house where he lodged at that time.

1751.

ÆTAT. 27.

WHILST Mr. Reynolds was pursuing his studies at Rome, several other English artists were there, to the same intent; particularly Mr. John Astley, who had been his fellow pupil in the school of Hudson, and of whom Reynolds used to say, that Astley would rather run three miles to deliver his message by word of mouth than venture to write

a note. Probably his education had been neglected; however, he afterwards became a very rich man by an advantageous marriage which he contracted with a wealthy lady of quality. The observation of his biographer on this event is, that Astley owed his fortune to his form; his follies to his fortune: indeed, at the period of his life I now allude to, he was as poor in purse, as he ever was as an artist.

It was an usual custom with the English painters at Rome to meet in the evenings for conversation, and frequently to make little excursions together in the country. On one of those occasions, on a summer afternoon, when the season was particularly hot, the whole company threw off their coats, as being an incumbrance to them, except poor Astley, who alone shewed great reluctance to follow this general example; this seemed very unaccountable to his companions, when some jokes, made on his singularity, at last obliged him to take his coat off also. The mystery was then immediately explained; for it appeared, that the hinder part of his waistcoat was made, by way of thriftiness, out of one of his own pictures, and thus displayed a tremendous waterfall on his back, to the great diversion of the spectators.

Reynolds has himself ingenuously confessed, in his writings, that at the first sight of Raffaelle's works in the Vatican, to his great disappointment,

he did not relish, or well comprehend their merits, but that he studied them till he did.

Perhaps we may account for this circumstance from the difference in the dispositions of the two painters: Raffaelle possessed a grandeur even to severity; and did not display in his pictures either the allurements of colour, or any great effect of light and shade; parts of the art which delighted Reynolds, whose natural disposition inclined him solely to the cultivation of its graces, and of whose works, softness and captivating sweetness are the chief characteristics.

After Reynolds had discovered the excellencies of Raffaelle, he very judiciously made several studies rather than copies from the most striking heads in the Vatican, such as more particularly contained powerful hints to assist him in his future practice, even in portrait, in respect to simplicity, dignity, character, expression, and drawing.

Several of those heads are now in my possession.

It is a curious circumstance, and scarcely to be credited in the life of an artist so refined, who seems, even from the earliest dawning of his genius, to have devoted himself to the service of the graces, that he should ever have been, at any period, a caricaturist. Yet this was actually the case during his residence at Rome, where he painted several pictures of that kind: particularly one, which is a sort of parody on Raf-

faelle's School of Athens, comprising about thirty figures and representing most of the English gentlemen then in that city; this picture, I have been informed, is now in the possession of Mr. Joseph Henry, of Straffan, in Ireland, whose portrait also it contains. But I have heard Reynolds himself say, that although it was universally allowed he executed subjects of this kind with much humour and spirit, he yet held it absolutely necessary to abandon the practice; since it must corrupt his taste as a portrait painter, whose duty it becomes to aim at discovering the perfections only of those whom he is to represent.

The treasures of art in the city of Rome, although so captivating to Reynolds, he at length thought it prudent to quit, in order to have the more time to inspect the various other schools of Italy, particularly those of Bologna and Genoa, before he took his final farewell of that delightful country; I must not omit, in this place, therefore, to insert the memoranda from his journal of what he saw at the latter city. He says—

"In the Palazzo Durazzo, I saw a most admirable portrait of a man by Rembrandt, his hands one in the other; a prodigious force of colouring.

"But the picture which should be first mentioned is very large, and the most capital one I have seen by Paul Veronese, of Mary Magdalen washing the feet of Christ, containing about ten figures as large as life, admirably finished.

"Three large pictures by Luca Jordano, the best likewise of that master; figures the size of life; to wit—

"Seneca going into the bath;

"A subject from Tasso's Jerusalem; a man and woman going to be burned at a stake;

"A Perseus shewing Medusa's head; many figures, some of which appear to be turned to stone.

"In the gallery are a great number of statues; I think the one considered the best is that of Mercury.

"A picture of St. Stephen stoned; said to be by Raffaelle.

"Palazzo of the Prince Doria. A magnificent fountain in the middle of the garden, representing Neptune drawn by sea-horses.

"This palace is uninhabited, so that scarcely any thing remains worth seeing, but such works of art as they could not remove; which are ceilings, and some of the walls painted by Perino del Vaga.

"Palazzo Brignoli. A crucifix of white marble in a niche; a real light, within the niche, comes from above, which has a fine effect.

"In the Palazzo Balbi, in Strada Balbi, are good pictures."

From a variety of observations on other places, I shall here give one respecting the cupola of the cathedral of Parma, of which he says—

"Relieve the light part of the picture with a

dark ground, or the dark part with a light ground, whichever will have the most agreeable effect, or make the best mass. The cupola of Parma has the dark objects relieved, and the lights scarcely distinguishable from the ground. Some whole figures are considered as shadows; all the lights are of one colour. It is in the shadows only that the colours vary. In general, all the shadows should be of one colour, and the lights only to be distinguished by different tints; at least it should be so when the back ground is dark in the picture."

At Florence, Reynolds spent only two months; and at Venice he made a still shorter stay—I think not more than six weeks—yet it is that school which seems most powerfully to have influenced the professional conduct of his life.

I cannot here refrain from recording a little circumstance as related by himself, which occurred during the time he was studying at Venice. Being one night at the opera, the manager of the house ordered the band to play an English ballad tune as a compliment to the English gentlemen then residing in that city. This happened to be the popular air which was played or sung in almost every street in London just at their time of leaving it; by suggesting to them that metropolis, with all its connexions and endearing circumstances, it immediately brought tears into our young painter's eyes, as well as into those of his countrymen who were present.

Thus nature will prevail, and Paul Veronese, Tintoret, and even Titian, were all given up at the moment, from the delightful prospect of again returning to his native land after an absence of near three years.

1752.

ÆTAT. 28.

MR. REYNOLDS, having thus with great assiduity sufficiently qualified himself in his profession by his tour of Italy, in which time he visited most of the principal cities of that country, set out on his return to England by the way of France, and took the road over Mount Cenis, upon which mountain he very unexpectedly met with his old master, Hudson, in company with Roubiliac the famous sculptor; both going to pay a short visit to Rome.

Of Roubiliac it is a pleasing circumstance to record, that his own goodness of heart first brought his excellent abilities into notice, and that his great success in life seems to have depended, in some degree, on his honest and liberal conduct soon after he came to England. At that time he was merely working as a journeyman for a person of the name of Carter, and the young artist having spent an evening at Vauxhall, on his return picked up a pocket-book, which he discovered, on examining it at his lodgings, to contain a considerable

number of Bank notes, together with some papers apparently of consequence to the owner. He immediately advertised the circumstance, and a claimant soon appeared, who was so pleased with the integrity of the youth, and so struck with his genius, of which he shewed several specimens, that he not only, being a man of rank and fortune, gave him a handsome remuneration, but also promised to patronize him through life, and faithfully performed that promise.

On the arrival of Mr. Reynolds at Paris he met his friend Mr. Chambers, the architect (afterwards Sir William), accompanied by his wife, then also on their way to Rome; and whilst there, he painted the portrait of Mrs. Chambers, which has since been copied in mezzotinto.* With this eminent architect, indeed, he long continued in habits of intimacy, respecting him as an instance of genius rising in opposition to circumstance.

As Mr. Chambers was one of Reynolds's most intimate friends, also one of the founders of the Royal Academy, an eminent British Artist, and one whose name will often occur in the course of this memoir, it is proper to introduce him to the reader with a slight sketch of the leading circumstances of his life.

* This portrait is painted with a hat on the head, which throws a shadow over part of the face; a sky behind with a light breaking through the clouds. Mrs. Chambers was at that time very handsome, and the picture is very excellent.

Mr. Chambers, it is pretty generally known, was, though a Swede by birth, a Briton by descent, having sprung from the ancient family of Chalmers in Scotland, who were also barons of Tartas in France: his father was a merchant, and had suffered much in his fortune by supplying Charles the Twelfth with money and goods during his campaigns, for which he received nothing more than the base copper coin of that mad monarch, struck for the purpose in his various emergencies, and which becoming soon depreciated, the generous and confiding merchant was involved in ruin.

At the early age of two years, Sir William was brought to England and placed at Rippon school, in Yorkshire, after leaving which he was appointed to a situation under the India Company, which carried him to China: he then returned to London, and soon displayed those talents for architecture which introduced him to the notice of the Earl of Bute, who immediately appointed him drawing master to his present Majesty; a situation partly held also by Goupy. In consequence of this connection he soon had the management of the gardens at Kew.

Sir William Chambers's works in architecture are numerous in England, Scotland, and Ireland; but the principal and best of them is Somerset Place, commenced by him in the year 1776, (but not yet fully completed,) under his immediate and constant inspection, according to his original de-

signs. Of his writings, the principal ones are—"A Treatise on Civil Architecture," which has gone through three editions—"A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening," which has gone through two, and has been elegantly translated into French, by Monsieur de la Rochet, with Chetqua's Explanatory Discourse, in defence of that work.

After parting with his friends at Paris, Mr. Reynolds proceeded for the British metropolis, and on his arrival in England, which took place in the month of October, 1752, he found his health in such an indifferent state, as to judge it prudent to pay a visit to his native air. He accordingly set off immediately for Plymouth, and during his visit to that town, painted the portrait of his friend Dr. John Mudge, a remarkable fine head, of which there is also a print.* From this time, a warm, disinterested, and reciprocal friendship subsisted between this truly respectable family of the Mudges and Mr. Reynolds, who always held them in the highest esteem, and the friendly connection between them was kept up to the latest period of his life.

This portrait, and one other of a young lady, were all that he undertook whilst at Plymouth, being strongly urged by his friend Lord Edgcumbe to return, as soon as possible, to the metropolis, as the only place where his fame could be esta-

* His price was then five guineas for a head portrait.

blished and his fortune advanced; in consequence of which advice, as soon as his health permitted, he set off for London, and engaged handsome apartments in St. Martin's lane, at that time the favorite and fashionable residence of artists, about the end of the year 1752.

At this period, as it is recorded of him, the earliest specimen he gave of his improvement in the art, was the head of a boy in a Turkish turban, richly painted, something in the style of Rembrandt; which being much talked of, induced his old master, Hudson, to pay him a visit, when it so much attracted his attention, that he called every day to see it in its progress, and perceiving at last no trace of his own manner left, he exclaimed, "By G—, Reynolds, you don't paint so well as when you left England!"

This little anecdote, however, we must consider as a jest upon Hudson by some of his contemporaries, or else it would seem that he had improved but little in taste during his Italian tour, in his progress to which Mr. Reynolds had met him, but the year before, upon Mount Cenis.

Soon after the return of Reynolds to his native land, the boldness of his youthful attempts, and the novelty of his style, totally confounded all the old painters of that time, who had not yet given up the adoration to their idol, the late Sir Godfrey Kneller; and as no genius in art had appeared in England from the period of Kneller's death, they

were not prepared to worship any other, or even to countenance any one guilty of the heresy of differing in practice from him whom they held to be absolute perfection in his line. The following anecdote will serve to corroborate the foregoing remark:—Ellis, an eminent painter of that time, was one of the few remaining artists of the school of Kneller, when Reynolds began to be known and to introduce a style entirely new. Having heard of the well-known picture of the Turkish boy, he called on Reynolds in order to see it; and perceiving his mode of painting to be very unlike the manner to which he himself had always been accustomed, and indeed unlike any thing he had ever seen before, he was as much astonished as Hudson is said to have been, and, like him, exclaimed—"Ah! Reynolds, this will never answer:—why, you don't paint in the least degree in the manner of Kneller:" but when Reynolds began to expostulate, and to vindicate himself, Ellis, feeling himself unable to give any good reason for the objection he had advanced, cried out in a great rage—"Shakespeare in poetry, and Kneller in painting, damme!" and immediately ran out of the room.

I have also heard Reynolds say, that, at the time when he began his career in life as a painter, the admiration of the works of Sir Godfrey Kneller was so prevalent in England, that, had any person ventured to name those of Vandyke in competition with them, the painters then living would

have laughed him to scorn, as having advanced the greatest absurdity. This instance serves to prove the power of prejudice and fashion, which we often see so abundantly contribute to prop up and exalt the lauded idol of the day.

The prepossession of the English nation in favour of Kneller and Lely, which Reynolds had to combat in the commencement of his career, raised an over-violent prejudice in his breast against those painters, and it continued to the end of his life. In one place he thus describes the artists of his early days:—

"Most of our portrait painters fall into one general fault. They have got a set of postures, which they apply to all persons indiscriminately; the consequence of which is, that all their pictures look like so many sign-post paintings; and if they have a history or a family-piece to paint, the first thing they do is to look over their common-place book, containing sketches which they have stolen from various pictures; then they search their prints over, and pilfer one figure from one print, and another from a second, but never take the trouble of thinking for themselves: on the contrary, the painter who has a genius, first makes himself master of the subject he is to represent, by reading, or otherwise; then works his imagination up to a kind of enthusiasm, till he in a degree perceives the whole event, as it were, before his eyes, when, as quick as lightning, he gives

his rough sketch on paper or canvas. By this means, his work has the air of genius stamped upon it; whilst the contrary mode of practice will infallibly be productive of tameness, and of such pictures as will have the semblance of copies. After the painter has made his sketch from his idea only, he may be allowed to look at the works of his predecessors for dresses, ornaments, &c., of the times he intends to represent.

"Every man is a painter for himself; whenever he hears or reads any remarkable event, he forms to himself the looks, actions, and even the ground on which it was transacted. The painter has nothing to do, but to copy those images on canvas which he has in his mind's eye."

"Suidas says that Phidias and Zeuxis were both of them transported by the same enthusiasm that gave life to all their works."

In some observations on the French painters of that day, Reynolds said—"The French cannot boast of above one painter of a truly just and correct taste, free of any mixture of affectation or bombast, and he was always proud to own from what models he had formed his style;—to wit, Raffaelle and the antique. But all the others of that nation seem to have taken their ideas of grandeur from romances, instead of the Roman or Grecian histories. Thus their heroés are decked out so nice and so fine, that they look like knights-errant just entering the lists at a tournament in gilt armour, and

loaded most unmercifully with silk, satin, velvet, gold, jewels, &c., and hold up their heads and carry themselves with an air like a petit-maître with his dancing-master at his elbow: thus corrupting the true taste, and leading it astray from the pure, the simple, and grand style, by a mock majesty and false magnificence. Even the rude uncultivated manner of Caravaggio is still a better extreme than those affected turns of the head, fluttering draperies, contrasts of attitude, and distortions of passion."

The first pupil Mr. Reynolds had under his care was Giuseppe Marchi, a young Italian whom he brought with him from Rome, the place of his birth. He continued with him the principal part of his life, and assisted him in making his copies, in sitting for attitudes for his portraits, and in partly painting his draperies. In the latter part of his time he had a salary from Reynolds, I think about a hundred per year, together with his board and lodging; but left him many years before his death, and went to Swansea in Wales, where he practised as a portrait painter. Some time after, he returned again to London, and to Reynolds, with whom he continued till the death of the latter; after which, he completed, as well as he was able, several pictures which Reynolds had left unfinished.

The picture mentioned above of a boy in a Turk-

ish habit, was painted from this Giuseppe Marchi, by Reynolds soon after they came to England, and is a great likeness: there is a mezzotinto print taken from it. Marchi* sometimes scraped in mezzotinto himself, and there are several plates done by him from the paintings of Reynolds. He died in London, April 2, 1808, aged 73 years.

1753.

ÆTAT. 29.

In 1753, the artists began to exert themselves to give some kind of public eclat to their profession, and an Academy of Arts was proposed to be instituted. For this purpose a meeting was called by circular letter,† in order to adopt the first principles for its foundation; but some jealousies and disagreements prevented any thing being done. Indeed, certain invidious persons were so anxious to thwart every thing connected with the improvement of the national taste, that they even descended to treat this as a subject fit for caricature, and published some satirical prints, in which they attempted to point ridicule at the most active friends to the measure. These prints, however, if they had any effect at the time, are now sunk in oblivion, and are no where to be found.

* His proper name was Guiseppe Philippo Liberati Marchi.

† Dated October 23.

It was about the year 1753 that Mr. Reynolds so much distinguished himself by some of his most admired portraits: and he now found his prospects so bright and extensive, that he removed to a large house on the north side of Great Newport-street, where he afterwards resided for eight or nine years.

This period was the dawn of his splendour; for his amiable modesty, accompanied by his extraordinary talents, soon gained him powerful and active connections: even his earliest sitters were of the highest rank; the second portrait which he painted in London being that of the old Duke of Devonshire. Yet Mr. Reynolds, notwithstanding this auspicious commencement of his career in London, seems to have been annoyed by the great celebrity of a very mean competitor, but who, at that time was the pink of fashion. This was John Stephen Liotard, a native of Geneva: he was born in 1702, and was designed for a merchant; but he went to study at Paris in 1725, and in 1738 accompanied the Marquis de Puisieux to Rome, who was going embassador to Naples. At Rome he was taken notice of by the Earls of Sandwich, and Besborough, (then Lord Duncannon,) who engaged Liotard to go with them on a voyage to Constantinople.

At the Porte he became acquainted with Richard, second Lord Edgecumbe, (who was the particular and early friend of Mr. Reynolds,) and Sir

Everard Fawkener, our embassador, who persuaded him to come to England. In his journey to the Levant he had adopted the Eastern habit, and wore it here with a very long beard. It contributed much to the portraits of himself, and some thought it was to attract customers. He painted both in miniature and enamel, though he seldom practised them: but he is best known by his works in crayons. His likenesses were very strong, and too like to please those who sat to him:—thus he had great employment the first year and very little the second. Devoid of imagination, he could render nothing but what he saw before his eyes. Freckles, marks of the small-pox, every thing found its place; not so much from fidelity, as because he could not conceive the absence of any thing that appeared to him. Minuteness prevailed in all his works, grace in none: nor was there any ease in his outlines; but the stiffness of a bust in all his portraits. Thence his heads want air and the softness of flesh.

Reynolds gives his opinion of this artist thus: "The only merit in Liotard's pictures is neatness, which, as a general rule, is the characteristic of a low genius, or rather no genius at all. His pictures are just what ladies do when they paint for their amusement; nor is there any person, how poor soever their talents may be, but in a very few years, by dint of practice, may possess themselves of every qualification in the art which this

great man has got." Liotard was twice in England, and staid about two years each time.

In respect to the laborious, and what is called the finished manner, Reynolds used to add, that the high finished manner of painting would be to be chosen, if it was possible with it to have that spirit and expression which infallibly fly off when you labour; but those are transient beauties which last less than a moment, and must be painted in as little time; besides in poring long, the imagination is fatigued and loses its vigour. You will find nature in the first manner, but it will be nature stupid and without action. The portraits of Holbien are of this high finished manner; and for colouring and similitude, what was ever beyond them? but then you see fixed countenances, and all the features seem to remain immoveable. Gerard Vanderwerf also — how spiritless are his figures!

From the second portrait which Reynolds painted in the metropolis, that of William, second Duke of Devonshire, a print was taken in mezzotinto, and it is said to be the first print ever taken from any of his works. This could not fail to have some effect upon public opinion; but it will, no doubt, be interesting to have a sketch of his own feelings at the time from some manuscript memorandums, written carlessly, and apparently in haste, and in which I find the following observations, evidently referring to the fashionable painting of

Liotard, and affording us some idea of the false taste prevalent in England at that period. He says—

"It requires an uncommon share of boldness and perseverance to stand against the rushing tide of Gothicism. A painter that would please, and has no greater views than making his fortune, I should advise, instead of studying the solemnity of Raffaelle, Poussin, or the Caraccis, to turn his eyes on the beautiful and pleasing manner of painting that is practised by the ingenious fan painters. There he will find what is so often called out for —"Give me daylight;"—in those works he will find daylight enough; and if he studies the bright and beautiful colours there made use of, he will merit the deserved and wished-for character of a pleasing painter. But to be serious; I do not know so despicable a character in the art, as what is understood in general as a pleasing painter; nor any thing that gives me a greater prejudice against a work, than when I am told I shall see a pleasing picture; such works are commonly faint, spiritless, gaudy things; how unlike the divine and noble vigour of Raffaelle!

"It is but a cold commendation to say of a painter—he pleases, and does no more. He ravishes; he transports with admiration; he seeks to take possession rather of your soul than of your eyes!—such is the character of a truly great painter.

"It is a melancholy reflection to a painter, who has ambition, to think that a picture painted in the style and manner of the greatest masters, should not please the nation where he is obliged to live.

"Those who are novices in connoissance judge of a picture only by the name of the painter; others, more advanced in knowledge of art, have a desire to think differently from the rest of the world in respect to the most famous pictures; and, again, from that partiality which men have to their own discoveries, will find out merits in pictures universally condemned."

"A real painter should be above any regard to pleasing the vulgar, whose judgment is governed solely by accident or caprice, and who are better pleased with a tawdry and false taste than with the pure, simple, and grand gusto of Raffaelle, which is too deep to be reached by their superficial imagination; but artists should not be content with admiring the effect; let them carefully examine into the causes, and in so doing, they will find more art, and knowledge of nature, than they are at first aware of."

Mr. Reynolds now exerted his talents to the utmost of their powers, and produced a singularly fine whole length portrait of his patron Commodore Keppel, in which he appears to be walking with a quick pace on the sea-shore, during a storm. This picture, by its excellence and the

novelty of the attitude, attracted general notice; and its design, as I have been informed, and perhaps with some truth, arose from the following interesting circumstance in the life of his noble friend.

Mr. Keppel having been appointed to the command of the Maidstone frigate in the year 1746, soon after his return from the eventful voyage under Commodore Anson, he was unfortunately wrecked in that ship, on the coast of France, on the 7th of July in the subsequent year; for, running close in shore, in pursuit of a French privateer, in the vicinity of Nantz, she struck and soon afterwards went to pieces. Captain Keppel, by his skill and active exertions, saved the lives of his crew; but they were immediately made prisoners: they, as well as he, were treated with great hospitality and politeness, and he himself was in a few weeks permitted to return to England, when a court-martial, as usual on such occasions, was held upon him, and he was honourably acquitted from all blame respecting the loss he had sustained.

The portrait represents him as just escaped from shipwreck; and has since been engraved by Fisher, that most exact and laborious artist, of whom Mr. Reynolds used to say, that he was injudiciously exact in his prints, which were mostly in the mezzotinto style, and wasted his time in making the precise shape of every leaf on a tree

with as much care as he would bestow on the features of a portrait. Fisher himself was not, indeed, brought up to the art; it is said that he was originally a hatter: he has, however, made some good copies of several of Reynolds's best pictures, particularly those of Garrick and Lady Sarah Bunbury.

The novelty and expression, introduced by Reynolds in his portrait of Mr. Keppel, were powerful stimulants to the public taste; and, as it has been well observed by one of his biographers, he "soon saw how much animation might be obtained by deviating from the insipid manner of his immediate predecessors; hence in many of his portraits, particularly when combined in family groups, we find much of the variety and spirit of a higher species of art. Instead of confining himself to mere likeness, in which, however, he was eminently happy, he dived, as it were, into the minds, and manners, and habits, of those who sat to him; and accordingly the majority of his portraits are so appropriate and characteristic, that the many illustrious persons whom he has delineated, will be almost as well known to posterity, as if they had seen and conversed with them."

In addition to his several bold, because early, advances to a judicious and original style in portrait painting, I may also record one which I have seen; a portrait painted at this time of a Captain Orme, aide-de-camp to General Braddock. This

picture attracted much notice by its boldness, and singularity of the attempt. It is a full length, wherein a horse is represented at the side of the officer; an effort in composition, so new to his barren competitors in art, as must have struck them with dismay, for they dared not venture on such perilous flights of invention. It must be observed that it is a very sombre picture, yet it possesses great merit.

Soon after this he added to his celebrity by his picture of Miss Greville and her brother, as Cupid and Psyche, which, it has been well observed, he composed and executed in a style superior to any portraits that had been produced in this kingdom since the days of Vandyke.

1754.

ÆTAT. 30.

Mr. Reynolds was now employed to paint several ladies of high quality, whose portraits the polite world flocked to see, and he soon became one of the most distinguished painters, not only in England, but in Europe. For it should be remarked, that at this time there were no historical works to make a demand upon the painter's skill: and though it may seem a curious observation, it will nevertheless be found, on examination, to be one most true, that hitherto this empire of Great Britain, so great, so rich, so magnificent, so bene-

volent, so abundant in all the luxury that the most ample wealth could procure, even this exalted empire had never yet been able to keep above one single historical painter from starving, whilst portrait painters have swarmed in a plenty, at all times thick as "autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa."

A true taste was wanting: vanity, however, was not wanting; and the desire to perpetuate the form of self-complacency crowded his sitting room with women who wished to be transmitted as angels, and with men who wanted to appear as heroes and philosophers. From Reynolds's pencil they were sure to be gratified. The force and felicity of his portraits not only drew around him the opulence and beauty of the nation, but happily gained him the merited honour of perpetuating the features of all the eminent and distinguished men of learning then living; with most of whom (so attractive were his manners as well as his talents) he contracted an intimacy which only ended with life. In this assemblage of genius, each was improved by each. Reynolds, like a man of a great mind, always cultivated the acquaintance and friendship of the first characters of his time; and often assisted those who were in difficulties, both with his advice and his purse.

He had a mind ever open and desirous to acquire useful information, a sound and penetrating judgement to select and separate what he acquired,

and infinite industry and application in rendering it serviceable to its proper purpose.

In his own memoranda, written at this period, a circumstance is given, which proves the quickness of his perception, and the use he made of it. He there describes the effect which a certain picture, by an old master, had upon one of his sitters; but as he does not specify the particular picture, we can only judge of its excellence from the trait recorded. It was a work, however, which he himself greatly admired, and at that time was hung up as one of the ornaments of his painting-room.

"To support," he says, "my own opinion of the excellence of this picture by a high authority, I cannot forbear the temptation of mentioning, that Lord ——, whilst I had the honor of drawing his portrait, could not keep from turning his eyes from me, and fixing them on this picture in raptures, with such an expression in his countenance as may be imagined from a man of his tender feelings. I snatched the moment, and drew him, as he then appeared to me, in profile, with as much of that expression of a pleasing melancholy as my capacity enabled me to hit off; when the picture was finished, he liked it, and particularly for that expression, though I believe without reflecting on the occasion of it."

It was not my good fortune to be personally acquainted with him at this early period of his

fame, when he first became intimate with the (afterwards) great Dr. Johnson; to whom, as Mr. Boswell says, "Reynolds was truly the *dulce decus*, and with whom he maintained an uninterrupted intimacy to the last hour of his life." I shall therefore avail myself of the very just account of the event, as related by Mr. Malone, in the sketch prefixed to his works.

"Very soon after Mr. Reynolds's return from Italy, his acquaintance with Dr. Johnson commenced; and their intimacy continued uninterrupted to the time of Johnson's death. Happening to meet with the Life of Savage in Devonshire, which, though published some years before, was new to him, he began to read it," as Mr. Boswell has informed us, "while he was standing with his arm leaning against a chimney-piece. It seized his attention so strongly, that, not being able to lay down the book till he had finished it, when he attempted to move, he found his arm totally benumbed." Being then unacquainted with the author, he must naturally have had a strong desire to see and converse with that extraordinary man; and, as the same writer relates, he, about this time, was introduced to him. When Johnson lived in Castle-street, Cavendish-square, he used to visit two ladies who resided at that time in Newport-street, opposite to Reynolds's, Miss Cotterells, daughters of Admiral Cotterell; Reynolds visited there also, and thus they met. Mr.

Reynolds, as I have observed above, had, from the first reading of his Life of Savage, conceived a very high admiration of Johnson's powers as a writer. His conversation no less delighted him, and he cultivated his acquaintance with the laudable zeal of one who was ambitious of general improvement. Mr. Reynolds, indeed, was lucky enough, at their very first meeting, to make a remark, which was so much above the common place style of conversation, that Johnson at once perceived that Reynolds had the habit of thinking for himself. The ladies were regretting the death of a friend to whom they owed great obligations; upon which Reynolds observed, "You have, however, the comfort of being relieved from the burden of gratitude." They were shocked a little at this alleviating suggestion, as too selfish; but Johnson defended it in his clear and forcible manner, and was much pleased with the *mind*, the just view of human nature it exhibited, like some of the reflections of Rochefoucault. The consequence was, that he went home with Reynolds, and supped with him. Mr. Reynolds used to relate a characteristic anecdote of Johnson. About the time of their first acquaintance, when they were one evening together at the Miss Cotterells', the then Duchess of Argyle and another lady of high rank came in: Johnson, thinking that the Miss Cotterells were too much engrossed by them, and that he and his friend were neglected as low

company, of whom they were somewhat ashamed, grew angry; and resolving to shock their supposed pride, by making their great visitors imagine they were low indeed, he addressed himself in a loud tone to Mr. Reynolds, saying, "How much do you think you and I could get in a week, if we were *to work as hard as we could?*" as if they had been common mechanics.

This anecdote, as it relates to Johnson, betrays in him more of pride, envy, and vulgarity, than of the patience of philosophy, totally unlike the disposition of his companion to whom he addressed his speech.

In regard to Reynolds's first acquaintance with Johnson, I have little to add; yet, with respect to the book which first engaged his attention towards the latter, it is worthy of remark how conspicuous the extraordinary credulity of Johnson appears in his Life of Savage. It is wonderful, indeed, that he did not convince himself whilst he was writing it, as there needs no other witness than his own narrative, to prove that he attempts to vindicate an imposture!

Of Johnson's pride, I have heard Reynolds himself observe, that if any man drew him into a state of obligation without his own consent, that man was the first he would affront, by way of clearing off the account. There is, in some men's minds, a repugnance to, nay an abhorrence of, a dependent state of obligation, or of resting on an-

other's patronage. This at its birth proceeds from dignity of soul, and proves the consciousness of inward strength. A virtuous reverence of ourselves is the foundation of respect from others; yet care should be taken that it does not swell into deformity, or lose its native comeliness and virtuous principle from being nursed and tutored by pride.

With respect to a state of obligation, one great inconvenience certainly may attend it, which is, that at some time it is possible that the patron may give a real and sufficient cause to his humble dependant to be offended. The meek sufferer is then in a dilemma. If he patiently swallows the bitter potion from a sense of duty for former favors, he will be considered as a slave, and as mean in spirit; and, on the the other hand, to resent it like a man, will to many appear much like ingratitude. Yet, again, to determine, like Johnson, to go through life, and to resist all patronage whatsoever, may indicate a proud and unsocial spirit!

Another anecdote, which I heard related by Miss Reynolds serves to shew how susceptible Johnson's pride was of the least degree of mortification.

At the time when Mr. Reynolds resided in Newport-street, he, one afternoon, accompanied by his sister Frances, paid a visit to the Miss Cotterells, who lived much in the fashionable world. Johnson was also of the party on this tea visit;

and at that time being very poor, he was, as might be expected, rather shabbily and slovenly apparelled. The maid servant, by accident, attended at the door to let them in, but did not know Johnson, although he had been a frequent visitor at the house, he having always been attended by the man servant. Johnson was the last of the three that came in; when the servant maid, seeing this uncouth and dirty figure of a man, and not conceiving he could be one of the company who came to visit her mistresses, laid hold of his coat just as he was going up stairs, and pulled him back again, saying, "You fellow, what is your business here? I suppose you intended to rob the house." This most unlucky accident threw poor Johnson into such a fit of shame and anger, that he roared out like a bull, for he could not immediately articulate, and was with difficulty at last able to utter, "What have I done? What have I done?" Nor could he recover himself for the remainder of the evening from this mortifying circumstance.

Of these ladies, the Miss Cotterells, so often mentioned in Johnson's Biography, as well as by the different writers who speak of Reynolds, it will not be reckoned obtrusive here to notice that they were the daughters of a very respectable naval officer, Rear Admiral Charles Cotterell, who, towards the latter part of his life, was not employed in the service, having been put on the

superannuated list of flag-officers in 1747. He died in 1754, very soon after Reynolds's acquaintance took place with his family.*

I have noticed this gentleman the more particularly as his daughters have been so often mentioned: and, in unison with the preceding anecdote of the Doctor, whose external appearance had so much deceived the servant at the Miss Cotterells, I may also add, that Johnson, it is well known, was as remarkably uncouth in his gait and action as slovenly in his dress, insomuch as to attract the attention of passengers who by chance met him in the street. Once, particularly, he was thus annoyed by an impertinent fellow, who noticed, and insultingly imitated him in de-

* His first appointment to the command of a ship was in 1726, when he succeeded Sir Yelverton Peyton in the Diamond frigate; and five years afterwards he was removed to the Princess Louisa, a line of battle ship. On the rupture with Spain, in 1739, he was commissioned in the Lion, of sixty guns, and served with Sir John Norris in the Channel fleet during the ensuing summer; after which he was ordered to proceed to the West Indies, in a squadron commanded by Sir Chaloner Ogle, for the express purpose of reinforcing Admiral Vernon, previous to the attack upon Carthagena. Captain Cotterell was actively engaged in that service, and, soon after its failure, returned to England; when, his ship being paid off, he was appointed to the command of the Canterbury in 1742. In that ship he went on service to Gibraltar, and on his return was promoted to the Royal George, in which ship he served for some time in the Channel fleet; but this was his last commission, as he remained unemployed after her being paid off, and, according to the etiquette of the service, lost his flag, not being in actual service, and in full pay, when the promotion took place in 1747.

rision so ludicrously, that the Doctor could not avoid seeing it, and was obliged to resent the affront, which he did in this manner: "Ah!" said Johnson, "you are a very weak fellow, and I will convince you of it;" and then immediately gave him a blow, which knocked the man out of the foot-path into the dirty street flat on his back, when the Doctor walked calmly on.

Another circumstance Reynolds used to mention relative to Dr. Johnson, which gives an idea of the situation and mode of living of that great philosopher in the early part of his life.

Roubiliac, the famous sculptor, desired of Reynolds that he would introduce him to Dr. Johnson, at the time when the Doctor lived in Gough-square, Fleet-street. His object was to prevail on Johnson to write an epitaph for a monument, on which Roubiliac was then engaged for Westminster Abbey. Reynolds accordingly introduced the sculptor to the Doctor, they being strangers to each other, when Johnson received him with much civility, and took them up into a garret, which he considered as his library; where, besides his books, all covered with dust, there was an old crazy deal table, and a still worse and older elbow chair, having only three legs. In this chair Johnson seated himself, after having, with considerable dexterity and evident practice, first drawn it up against the wall, which served to support it on that side on which the leg was deficient. He then

took up his pen, and demanded what they wanted him to write. On this Roubiliac, who was a true Frenchman, (as may be seen by his works,) began a most bombastic and ridiculous harangue, on what he thought should be the kind of epitaph most proper for his purpose, all which the Doctor was to write down for him in correct language; when Johnson, who could not suffer any one to dictate to him, quickly interrupted him in an angry tone of voice, saying, "Come, come, Sir, let us have no more of this bombastic, ridiculous rhodomontade, but let me know, in simple language, the name, character, and quality, of the person whose epitaph you intend to have me write."

Such was the first interview of two men both eminent for genius; and of Roubiliac I may here record another anecdote, which took place on the return of that sculptor from Rome, when he paid a visit to Reynolds, and expressed himself in raptures on what he had seen on the continent—on the exquisite beauty of the works of antiquity, and the captivating and luxuriant splendour of Bernini. "It is natural to suppose," said he, "that I was infinitely impatient till I had taken a survey of my own performances in Westminster Abbey, after having seen such a variety of excellence, and by G— my own work looked to me meagre and starved, as if made of nothing but tobacco-pipes."

A strong proof this of the improvement he had gained from his tour to the continent, of his candor, and uncommon humility.*

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* The following anecdote has been communicated to me by a friend, respecting this modern sculptor, of whom some notice has above been taken.

"Roubiliac, being on a visit in Wiltshire, happened to take a walk in a church-yard on a Sunday morning, near Bowood, just as the congregation was coming out of church; and meeting with old Lord Shelburne, though perfect strangers to each other, they entered into conversation, which ended in an invitation to dinner. When the company were all assembled at table, Roubiliac discovered a fine antique bust of one of the Roman Empresses, which stood over a side-table, when immediately running up to it with a degree of enthusiasm, he exclaimed, "What an air! what a pretty mouth! what *tout ensemble!*" The company began to stare at one another for some time, and Roubiliac regained his seat; but instead of eating his dinner, or shewing attention to any thing about him, he every now and then burst out into fits of admiration in praise of the bust. The guests by this time, concluding he was mad, began to retire one by one, till Lord Shelburne was almost left alone. This determined his Lordship to be a little more particular; and he now, for the first time, asked him his name. "My name!" says the other, "What, do you not know me then? My name is Roubiliac."—"I beg your pardon, Sir," said his Lordship; "I now feel that I should have known you." Then calling on the company, who had retired to the next room, he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, you may come in; this is no absolute madman. This is M. Roubiliac, the greatest statuary of his day, and only occasionally mad in the admiration of his art."

1755.

ÆTAT. 31.

In 1755, Mr. Reynolds was still advancing in fame. His price in that year was twelve guineas for a head only, and for half and whole lengths in proportion: and in his memoranda of the 6th of December of that year, I find the following record of the colours he then made use of, and of the preparation of his pallet:

"For painting the flesh;—black, blue black, white, lake, carmine, orpiment, yellow ochre, ultramarine, and varnish.

"To lay the pallet;—first lay carmine and white in different degrees; second, lay orpiment and white, ditto; third, lay blue black, and white, ditto.

"The first sitting, for expedition, make a mixture on the pallet as near the sitter's complexion as you can."

He adds also this observation on colouring:—

"To preserve the colours fresh and clean in painting, it must be done by laying on more colours, and not by rubbing them in when they are once laid; and, if it can be done, they should be laid just in their proper places at first, and not any more be touched: because the freshness of the colours is tarnished and lost by mixing and jumbling them together; for there are certain colours which destroy each other, by the motion of the pencil, when mixed to excess."

1756.

ÆTAT. 32.

DOCTOR JOHNSON had a great desire to cultivate the friendship of Richardson, the author of Clarissa, and with this view paid him frequent visits.* These were received very coldly by the latter; "but," observed the Doctor (in speaking of this to a friend), "I was determined to persist till I had gained my point; because I knew very well, that, when I had once overcome his reluctance and shyness of humour, our intimacy would contribute much to the happiness of both." The event verified the Doctor's prediction.

It must, however, be remarked, that an intimacy with Johnson was always attended with a certain portion of inconvenience to persons whose time was much occupied; as his visits, to those he liked, were long, frequent, and very irregular in regard to the hours.

The Doctor's intercourse with Reynolds was at first produced in the same manner as is described in respect to Richardson. He frequently called in the evening, and remained to a late hour, when Mr. Reynolds was desirous of going into new company, after having been harassed by his professional occupations the whole day. This some-

* Johnson had been known to Richardson for some years previous to the above date.

times overcame his patience to such a degree, that, one evening in particular, on entering the room where Johnson was waiting to see him, he immediately took up his hat and went out of the house. Reynolds hoped by this means he would have been effectually cured; but Johnson still persisted and at last gained his friendship.

1757.

ÆTAT. 33.

JOHNSON introduced Mr. Reynolds and his sister to Richardson, but hinted to them at the same time, that, if they wished to see the latter in good humour, they must expatiate on the excellencies of his Clarissa.

Johnson soon became a frequent visitor at Mr. Reynolds's, particularly at Miss Reynolds's tea-table, where he had every opportunity of female conversation whilst drinking his favorite beverage.

Indeed his visits were not alone to Reynolds, but to Miss Reynolds, for whom he had the highest respect and veneration: to such a degree, that, some years afterwards, whilst the company at Mr. Thrale's were speculating upon a microscope for the mind, Johnson exclaimed, "I never saw one that would bear it, except that of my dear Miss Reynolds, and her's is very near to purity itself."

There is no doubt that Miss Reynolds gained much of his good-will by her good-humoured at-

tention to his extraordinary predilection for tea; he himself saying, that he wished his tea-kettle never to be cold. But Reynolds having once, whilst spending the evening at Mr. Cumberland's, reminded him of the enormous quantity he was swallowing, observing, that he had drank eleven cups, Johnson replied, "Sir, I did not count your glasses of wine, why then should you number up my cups of tea?"

Johnson's extraordinary, or rather extravagant, fondness for this refreshment did not fail to excite notice wherever he went; and it is related, though not by Boswell, that whilst on his Scottish tour, and spending some time at Dunvegan, the castle of the chief of the Macleods, the Dowager Lady Macleod having repeatedly helped him, until she had poured out sixteen cups, she then asked him, if a small bason would not save him trouble and be more agreeable?—"I wonder, Madam," answered he roughly, "why all the ladies ask me such questions! It is to save yourselves trouble, Madam, and not me." The lady was silent, and resumed her task. Every reader, in this place, will recollect the so often told anecdote of his versification at Mr. Reynolds's tea-table, when criticising Percy's Reliques, and imitating his ballad style—

> "Oh! hear it then my Renny dear,
> Nor hear it with a frown—
> You cannot make the tea so fast
> As I can gulp it down."

Doctor Johnson's high opinion of Sir Joshua Reynolds was formed at a very early period of their intimacy, and increased, instead of diminishing, through life. Once at Mr. Thrale's, when Reynolds left the room, Johnson observed, "There goes a man not to be spoiled by prosperity;"—and on another occasion he said, "A story is a specimen of human manners, and derives its sole merit from its truth. When Foote has told me something, I dismiss it from my mind like a passing shadow: when Reynolds tells me something, I consider myself as possessed of an idea the more." It was about this time too, that a conversation took place between him and Johnson, which may, in some measure, be considered as a kind of apology on the part of Johnson, for having, in a degree, forced himself into an intimacy; when Johnson said, "If a man does not make new acquaintance as he advances through life, he will soon find himself alone: a man, Sir, should keep his friendship in constant repair."

1758.

ÆTAT. 34.

From a letter of Dr. Johnson to Bennet Langton, in the year 1758, we find that the fame of Mr. Reynolds had so far increased, as to justify him in raising his price pretty considerably. He says—"Mr. Reynolds has this day (January 9th)

raised his price to twenty guineas a head, and Miss is much employed in miniatures. I know not any body else whose prosperity has increased since you left them."

It was about the period of 1758, when his price was only twenty guineas a head, that Reynolds found his profession the most lucrative: as I have heard himself confess, that, at that time, he received six sitters in the day, and found it necessary to keep a list of the names of those who waited, until vacancies occurred, in order to have their portraits painted by him. He then received them in the order in which they were set down in the list. Many of those portraits were sent home, even before the colours were dry. And he sometimes has lamented the being interrupted in his work by idle visitors, saying, "those persons do not consider that my time is worth, to me, five guineas an hour."

He kept a port-folio in his painting-room, containing every print that had then been taken from his portraits; so that those who came to sit, had this collection to look over, and if they fixed on any particular attitude, in preference, he would repeat it precisely in point of drapery and position; as this much facilitated the business, and was sure to please the sitter's fancy.*

* In an account of the rise of the arts, or the encouragement given to them in this country, at the time when Reynolds was fast advancing towards the attainment of fame, it may not be

He now engaged several drapery painters to assist him: indeed, I have heard him observe, that

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unsuitable to mention; what all preceding biographers have passed over, the liberality of the Duke of Richmond. The following is the copy of an advertisement which was published in the weekly papers during the years 1758 and 1759:—

"For the use of those who study
Painting, Sculpture, and Engraving, will be opened,
On Monday, the 6th of March next,
At his Grace the Duke of Richmond's,
In Whitehall,

"A room containing a large collection of original plaister casts from the best antique statues and busts which are now at Rome and Florence.

"It is imagined, that the study of these most exact copies from antiques may greatly contribute towards giving young beginners of genius an early taste and idea of beauty and proportion, which, when thoroughly acquired, will, in time, appear in their several performances.

"The public is therefore advertised, that any known painter, sculptor, carver, or other settled artist, to whom the study of these *gessos* may be of use, shall have liberty to draw or model from any of them, at any time; and upon application to the person that has the care of them, any particular figure shall be placed in such light as the artist shall desire.

"And, likewise, any young man or boy, above the age of twelve years, may also have the same liberty, by a recommendation from any known artist to Mr. Wilton, sculptor, in Hedge Lane.

"For these young persons, a fresh statue or bust will be set once a week or fortnight in a proper light for them to draw from.

"They will only be admitted from the hour of nine to eleven in the morning, and from the hour of two to four in the afternoon.

"On Saturday, Messrs. Wilton and Cipriani will attend to see what progress each has made, to correct their drawings and models, and give them such instruction as shall be thought necessary.

"Nobody

no man ever acquired a fortune by the work of his own hands alone.

1759.

ÆTAT. 35.

NOTWITHSTANDING Mr. Reynolds's prosperity was now so great as to occupy the whole of his time, yet, in the succeeding year, he found leisure to produce his first efforts in the literary way, consisting of three papers for the Idler, then conducted and principally executed by his friend Johnson. At that time, indeed, Johnson was under many obligations, as well as those literary ones, to Reynolds, whose generous kindness would never per-

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"Nobody is to touch any of the *gessos* upon any account, or to move them out of their places, or draw upon either them, their pedestals, or the walls of the room; any person offending in such a manner will be dismissed, and never admitted again upon any consideration.

"There will be given, at Christmas and Midsummer, annually, to those who distinguish themselves by making the greatest progress, the following premiums:

"A figure will be selected from the rest, and a large silver medal will be given for the best design of it, and another for the best model in basso relievo.

"A smaller silver medal for the second best design, and one for the second best basso relievo.

"The servant who takes care of the room has strict orders not to receive any money. It is therefore hoped and expected that none will be offered."

London Chronicle, Feb. 25, 1758.

mit his friends to *ask* a pecuniary favour;—his purse and heart being always open.

Johnson, however, still preserved the strong spirit of independent exertion; and being at this period pushed for money to defray the expenses of his mother's funeral, and to settle some little debts she had left, he sat down to his "Rasselas," which, as he afterwards informed his friend Reynolds, he composed in the evenings of a single week, having it printed as rapidly as it was written, and not allowing himself time even for correction before it was sent to the press; nor did he read it over until several years afterwards, when finding it accidentally in a chaise, whilst travelling in company with Mr. Boswell. Yet this work, so hastily written, enabled the publisher to pay him the sum of one hundred and twenty-five pounds.

I have heard Reynolds repeat a speech which the Doctor made about this time, and in which he gave himself credit in two particulars:—"There are two things," said he, "which I am confident I can do very well: one is, an introduction to any literary work, stating what it is to contain, and how it should be executed in the most perfect manner; the other is a conclusion, shewing, from various causes, why the execution has not been equal to what the author promised to himself and to the public."

The papers in the Idler, by Reynolds to which I have alluded, are the Numbers 76, 79, and 82, written between September and November, 1759.* In the first of these he ridicules, with considerable humour, the cant of ignorant and presuming connoisseurs, who, trusting to narrow rules, are often guided by *false* principles; and, even though these should be *correct*, are still totally unqualified to form a just estimation of the sublime beauties in works of genius: and in this Essay he states a position which, given with his ingenuity, has an appearance of as much novelty as truth, that whatever part of an art can be executed or criticised by rules, that part is no longer the work of genius, which implies excellence out of the reach of rules: so that, as he adds, if a man has not correct perceptions, it will be in vain for him to endeavour to supply their place by rules, which, though they may certainly enable him to talk more learnedly, will never teach him to distinguish more acutely. In laying down these positions, he does not, however, assert that rules are absolutely injurious to a just perception of works of taste and genius, or to their execution; but merely censures that scrupulous and servile attention to minute exactness or frivolous ornament, which are sometimes incon-

* Published by Newbery in the Universal Chronicle, or Weekly Gazette, on Saturday, Sept. 20, Oct. 20, and Nov. 10, 1759.

sistent with higher excellence, and always lost in the blaze of expanded genius.

In his second Essay he displays a considerable depth of thought, and great quickness of perception, on the just meaning of the general rule, "to imitate nature." He shews that a mere literal adherence to this rule would baulk every flight of fancy in the painter, though these flights are what serve to immortalize the poet; such imitation, if conducted servilely, being a species of drudgery to which the painter of genius can never stoop, and one in which even the understanding has no part, being merely a mechanical effort. He further shews, that Painting has its best plea for claiming kindred with its sister, Poetry, from the power which, like her, it can exercise over the imagination; and, as he adds, it is to this power that the painter of genius directs his aim: in this sense he studies nature, and often arrives at his end, even by being unnatural, in the confined sense of the word. His concluding remarks in this Essay, on the works of Michael Angelo, contain in themselves a volume of criticism, and display that "enthusiasm of intellectual energy," by which he was always moved, when speaking of, or contemplating the productions of, those masters most eminent for their intellectual power.

In the third Essay, his definition of beauty is as clear and distinct as his conception of it was accurate: and from the inference he draws—that the

works of nature, if we compare one species with another, are all equally beautiful, and that preference is given from custom, or from some association of ideas, and thus, that in creatures of the same species, beauty is the medium or centre of all its various forms—he again illustrates and confirms the principle of his first Essay, proving that the painter, by attending to the invariable and general ideas of nature, produces beauty; but that, if he regards minute particularities and accidental discriminations, so far will he deviate from the universal rule, 'and pollute his canvas with deformity.'* Indeed, those papers may be considered as a kind of syllabus of all his future discourses, and certainly occasioned him some thinking in their composition. I have heard Reynolds say, that Johnson required them from him on a sudden emergency, and on that account he sat up the whole night to complete them in time; and by it he was so much disordered, that it produced a vertigo in his head.

In addition to what I have already said respecting Reynolds's contributions to the Idler, I may here add, that at that time he had also committed to paper a variety of remarks on the occasion, which afterwards served him as hints for his discourses; and from those unfinished memoranda I now insert a few of his first thoughts, evidently drawn up as matter of caution for himself:—

* This concluding passage was added by Johnson.

"Avoid that insipidity which is very commonly the result when you take your ideas from any preceding master. Salvator Rosa saw the necessity of trying some new source of pleasing the public in his works. The world were tired with Claude Lorraine's and Gasper Poussin's long train of imitators.

"Salvator, therefore, struck into a wild, savage kind of nature, which was new and striking. Sannazarius, the Italian poet, for the same reason, substituted fishermen for shepherds, and changed the scene to the sea.

"The want of simplicity in the air of the head, the action of the figure, and colour of the drapery, is destructive of dignity. If a painter has a true taste for simplicity, it will be discovered in every part of his work, even his colouring; there is a pure, chaste modesty, as it may be called, in opposition to a bold, impudent, glaring colour, such as you see in ordinary painters' works.

"Indeed, the want of simplicity is the prevailing error in most painters respecting their works. They are apt to think they can never enrich their pictures too much; their colours are gaudy in the extreme: but what I particularly object against is the violent love that almost all of them have for contrast; and I dare say there is scarcely a painter but thinks he can never contrast his figures too much.

"The French writers on painting, which are the

best we have, are fond of talking of contrast:—"If one figure," says Du Piles, "is with the face towards you, let the next to it shew his back." Those rules can only proceed from a narrow-minded mechanical artist; and not from one who has studied nature, the antique, Raffaelle, or the Carraccis. I do not mean to say that such contrast will always have a mean effect; but to establish it as an inviolable rule is absurd, and tends to destroy the greatest beauty of a painting, which should represent pure, unaffected nature. By means of those studied contrasts, no figure so placed can appear eager and intent on what he is about. It gives also a hurry and confusion to the composition of the picture; and of consequence, the same hurry of imagination to the spectator, and deprives the work of its most noble quality, which is the majesty of repose.

"When I think of this high principle of the art, it always brings to my mind the finest pictures at Bologna by Lud. Carracci, and the Transfiguration by Raffaelle. In this last, every figure is animated, ardent, and intent on what he is engaged in, but still with dignity; then there is also a certain solemnity pervading the whole picture which must strike every one with awe and reverence, that is capable of being touched by any excellence in works of art.

"When I have stood looking at that picture from figure to figure, the eagerness, the spirit, the

close unaffected attention of each figure to the principal action, my thoughts have carried me away that I have forgot myself; and for that time might be looked upon as an enthusiastic madman; for I could really fancy the whole action was passing before my eyes. How superior is this power of leading captive the imagination, to that of producing natural drapery, although so natural, that, as the phrase is, it looks as if you could take it up! A picture having this effect on the spectator, he need not ask his cicerone whether it is a good picture or not, nor endeavour to criticise it by the help of any rules he may have learned from books.

"But whilst others only admire the work, it is the artist's business to examine from whence this effect proceeds. I will take the liberty of giving a hint; others may carry it further. The solemnity that the picture first strikes you with, proceeds from its not having too much light, for the same reason that the light of the evening is more solemn than the gay sun at noon day; consequently, he, who would attempt the heroic style in painting, should never set his figures in bright sunshine;* and it is for this reason I have often said, that Rubens's colouring, although a much more esteemed colourist than Raffaelle, would degrade and ruin Raffaelle's pictures.

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* "Vide King John tampering with Hubert, in Shakespeare's play."

"Another excellence in the picture of the Transfiguration is the noble kind of harmony of the colouring; a quality, perhaps, this picture has never been remarked for before. It is one of the vulgar errors to imagine, that a picture can never have too much harmony; hence painters, by breaking their colours too much, reduce their picture to be an imitation of a painting on a lady's fan, and entirely destroy its effect when seen at any distance, those broken colours being too weak to preserve their proper degree of force. For instance, the works of Luca Jordano, by an over fondness for this sort of harmony, when they are placed at a distance from the spectator, look altogether like the colour of milk and water. A very close comparison may be made between the harmony of music and that of painting. Music of the soft, gentle, and delicate kind, intended to be heard best when near, requires the notes to be soft, and fall gently into each other, without any harshness in their extremes; whilst, on the contrary, the more masculine and noble style of music, such as marches, &c. should be bold and loud.

"The same rule applies to poetry. The smooth numbers of Pope are not so grand as the masculine style of Milton and Shakespeare.

"It is not always necessary that the principal light should fall on the principal figure; for it may not always be convenient in regard to the propriety of the composition. The principal light

should always be near the middle of the picture; but the principal figure cannot always be placed there. It may be sufficient that the figure which receives the principal light directs you to the principal figure by its action; as may be seen instanced in Raffaelle's Transfiguration. There is also a principal colour as well as a principal light. The Reds, Blues, Yellows, &c. which may be scattered up and down in the picture—of these, one should be principal, to govern all the rest; and this even to the flesh colours. The greatest masters, in order to make a principal colour that shall absorb, if I may so say, even the faces, have, wherever the subject will admit of it, introduced a naked figure which most effectually does it: but when the subject is such as will not admit of a naked figure, the artist must do as Raffaelle has done in the Transfiguration, who has clothed the female figure, which receives the principal light, with a bright carnation colour, and made her point to the principal object of the transaction, so that this red drapery, which receives a large and broad light, is the principal of all the Reds in the picture.

"The Transfiguration is the most compleat picture in respect to harmony, in the grand stile, as Guido's Aurora is in the gay stile; but all the colours of the latter are so broken and of such changeable stuffs, that you can scarce call them by a name. It is a picture, gay, soft, and pleasing.

Raffaelle's, with equal harmony, has colours bold, masculine, and dense. The eye does not run so softly from one colour to another, as in Guido's; but here, if I may use the expression, the eye feels the colours; they are strong, sensible, and embodied. Guido's in comparison appears flimsy. There is as much difference between them as between masculine and feminine.

"Rembrandt was harmonious rather too much; he wanted opposition. Luca Jordano was often the same, but wanted that fine taste of colouring.

"Berghem was too red.

"There cannot be found a better instance of breadth and distinctness of light and shadow, than in a figure by Fiamingo, in the church of St. Peter at Rome, a full length statue of St. Bartholomew, four times the size of life. The other statues, which are near it, appear all of a mass, and make neither light nor shadow.

"It is absolutely necessary that a painter, as the first requisite, should endeavour as much as possible to form to himself an idea of perfection, not only of beauty, but of what is perfection in a picture. This conception he should always have fixed in his view, and unless he has this view we shall never see any approaches towards perfection in his works, for it will not come by chance.

"If a man has nothing of that which is called genius, that is, if he is not carried away (if I may so say) by the animation, the fire of enthusiasm,

all the rules in the world will never make him a painter.

"He who possesses genius, is enabled to see a real value in those things which others disregard and overlook. He perceives a difference in cases where inferior capacities see none, as the fine ear for music can distinguish an evident variation in sounds which to another ear more dull seem to be the same. This example will also apply to the eye in respect to colouring.

"One who has a genius will comprehend in his idea the whole of his work at once; whilst he who is deficient in genius amuses himself with trifling parts of small consideration, attends with scrupulous exactness to the minuter matters only, which he finishes to a nicety, whilst the whole together has a very ill effect.

"A painter should have a solid foundation in the principles of his art; so as to be able to vindicate his works whenever they may be unjustly censured; and not of such an unstable judgement as to estimate the merit of his pieces by the money they bring him.

"The most general rule in the choice of subjects fit for the purpose of the art is that of Horace:—

> "Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci,
> Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo."

Such were his desultory thoughts to which he

could recur to refresh his memory as occasion might require.

1760.

ÆTAT. 36.

The efforts of Mr. Reynolds had not only produced an improvement in the art, in consequence of the number of professional men who imitated his style, but had also infused such a taste in the public at large, that in the year 1760, they were content to pay twenty-five guineas for a head.

This improved taste in portrait painting had also extended itself to other departments of the art, which even but ten years before had been at a low ebb in public opinion; for though the artists had contrived to support, by annual subscription, an academy in St. Martin's-lane, governed by a committee of the whole body, yet that whole body consisted of but a very small number.

The public attention, indeed, had been fortunately, in some measure, engaged by the paintings which several of the professors had gratuitously bestowed on the Foundling Hospital; and the body of artists were, from the result of this experiment, stimulated to form a general exhibition of their several works, which first took place in this year, at the great room of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, lent them for the express purpose. The

exhibition so far succeeded as to have the double effect of amusing and enlightening the public, whilst the artists themselves were also gainers by the spirit of emulation excited by competition: for as Edwards observes, from the time of the accession of his present Majesty to the throne, the arts have made more rapid advances towards perfection in Great Britain, than ever was known in any other country in so short a space of time.

1761.

ÆTAT. 37.

JOHNSON, this year, in a letter to Baretti, alludes to the general exhibition just established, saying, "The artists have instituted a yearly exhibition of pictures and statues, in imitation, I am told, of foreign academies. This year was the second exhibition. They please themselves much with the multitude of spectators, and imagine that the English school will rise much in reputation. Reynolds is without a rival, and continues to add thousands to thousands, which he deserves, among other excellencies, by retaining his kindness for Baretti.

"This exhibition has filled the heads of the artists, and lovers of Art. Surely life, if it be not long, is tedious; since we are forced to call in the assistance of so many trifles, to rid us of our time —of that time which never can return."

The cynical turn of this latter observation is certainly not in unison with the sentiments which dictated the former part of the passage; but we must make allowances not only for the want of perception of the beauties of painting, which was the natural consequence of Johnson's near-sightedness, but also for that species of envy which perhaps even Johnson felt, when comparing his own annual gains with those of his more fortunate friend.

At the first exhibition opened by the artists, the catalogue was the ticket of admission by which whole companies could be admitted; but this mode was found, by experiment, to produce little other than tumult, and it was then considered as absolutely necessary to demand one shilling admission from each person. Johnson, although he speaks so superciliously of the arts, yet willingly employed his pen in composing a preface to the catalogue, which was then given gratis: but as this was a new regulation, it was thought requisite by the artists to give reasons to the public for this alteration; and as Johnson has done this so well in his forcible and clear language, explaining the nature and intention of the exhibition, and has also given so essential a part of historical information in the region of the arts, I apprehend no apology can be necessary for inserting it in this place.

ASHMOLEAN OXFORD MUSEUM

WRITTEN BY DR. JOHNSON.

"The public may justly require to be informed of the nature and extent of every design for which the favour of the public is openly solicited. The artists, who were themselves the first promoters of an exhibition in this nation, and who have now contributed to the following catalogue, think it, therefore, necessary to explain their purpose, and justify their conduct. An exhibition of the works of art being a spectacle new in the kingdom, has raised various opinions and conjectures among those who are unacquainted with the practice of foreign nations. Those who set their performances to general view have too often been considered the rivals of each other; as men actuated, if not by avarice, at least by vanity, as contending for superiority of fame, though not for a pecuniary prize. It cannot be denied or doubted, that all who offer themselves to criticism are desirous of praise; this desire is not only innocent but virtuous, while it is undebased by artifice, and unpolluted by envy; and of envy or artifice those men can never be accused, who, already enjoying all the honors and profits of their profession, are content to stand candidates for public notice, with genius yet unexperienced, and diligence yet unrewarded; who, without any hope of increasing their own reputation or interest, expose their names and their works, only that they may furnish an opportunity of ap-

pearance to the young, the diffident, and the neglected. The purpose of this exhibition is not to enrich the artist, but to advance the art; the eminent are not flattered with preference, nor the obscure insulted with contempt; whoever hopes to deserve public favor, is here invited to display his merit. Of the price put upon this exhibition, some account may be demanded. Whoever sets his works to be shewn, naturally desires a multitude of spectators; but his desire defeats its own end, when spectators assemble in such numbers as to obstruct one another.

"Though we are far from wishing to diminish the pleasures, or depreciate the sentiments of any class of the community, we know, however, what every one knows, that all cannot be judges or purchasers of works of art. Yet we have already found, by experience, that all are desirous to see an exhibition. When the terms of admission were low, the room was thronged with such multitudes, as made access dangerous, and frightened away those whose approbation was most desired.

"Yet, because it is seldom believed that money is got but for the love of money, we shall tell the use which we intend to make of our expected profits. Many artists of great abilities are unable to sell their works for their due price:—to remove this inconvenience, an annual sale will be appointed, to which every man may send his works, and them, if he will, without his name. Those

works will be reviewed by the committee that conduct the exhibition; a price will be secretly set on every piece, and registered by the secretary; if the piece exposed is sold for more, the whole price shall be the artist's; but if the purchasers value it at less than the committee, the artist shall be paid the deficiency from the profits of the exhibition."

Finding himself now sufficiently established to move in a higher sphere, Mr. Reynolds quitted his residence in Newport-street, and removed to Leicester-fields, where he had bought a handsome house on the west side of the square; to which he added a splendid gallery for the exhibition of his works, and a commodious and elegant room for his sitters. In this speculation, as I have heard him confess, he laid out almost the whole of the property he had then realized. He also set up a handsome carriage; and his mode of living was in other respects suitably elegant.*

With respect to this permanent residence which he fitted up in Leicester-fields, it may perhaps be gratifying to young beginners in the art to be informed of some minute particulars concerning the apparatus of a painter who was so successful, and became so illustrious in his profession.

His painting room was of an octagonal form,

* Mr. Reynolds gave a ball and refreshments to a numerous and elegant company on opening his gallery to the public.

about twenty feet long, and about sixteen in breadth. The window which gave the light to this room was square, and not much larger than one half the size of a common window in a private house, whilst the lower part of this window was nine feet four inches from the floor. The chair for his sitters was raised eighteen inches from the floor, and turned round on castors. His pallets were those which are held by a handle, not those held on the thumb. The sticks of his pencils were long, measuring about nineteen inches. He painted in that part of the room nearest to the window; and never sat down when he worked.

The carriage which he set up, on removing to that house, was particularly splendid, the wheels were partly carved and gilt; and on the pannels were painted the four seasons of the year, very well executed by Charles Catton, R. A., the most eminent coach-painter of his day.

The coachman frequently got money by admitting the curious to a sight of it; and when Miss Reynolds complained that it was too shewy, Mr. Reynolds replied, "What! would you have one like an apothecary's carriage?"

1762.

ÆTAT. 38.

In 1762, the famous affair of the Cock-lane Ghost took place, in which Johnson acted rather a prominent part. Mr. Reynolds, however, had

too little taste for those wanderings of the imagination to join in the absurdity which gave credence to this juggling business; he therefore escaped that severity of censure which fell upon Johnson and several others.

At this time he was particularly noticed by the pen of Sterne, in the sixth volume of his Tristram Shandy, just then published; and there too is noticed that want of stability in the colours of Reynolds which has, in many instances, been very severely, and sometimes even unjustly, adverted to. He says, "I would not answer for my aunt Dinah was she alive—faith scarce for her picture—were it but painted by Reynolds—but if I go on with drawing, after naming that son of Apollo, I'll be shot:"—and I may also notice another compliment from Sterne;—speaking of an awkward attitude into which father Shandy had put himself, in order to reach his pocket handkerchief with his left hand, whilst he had employed his right hand in holding his wig, and which awkwardness might have been totally avoided by only taking off his wig with his left hand, and leaving his right hand at liberty for his handkerchief—"Then, his whole attitude had been easy—natural—unforced: Reynolds himself, great and graceful as he paints, might have painted him as he sat." The quotation, it is true, is not very important; yet still it serves to shew in how much respect Reynolds was held by men of genius.

On the mention of Sterne, the following circumstance comes to my recollection. Mrs. C——, a lady of considerable genius, dining one day at Reynolds's table, met Lawrence Sterne there, who, as is generally known, was as licentious in his conversation as in his writings, when this lady attacked him with so much keen wit and spirit on his immorality, that he, being already in an ill state of health, is said to have been mortified to such a degree, that his death was considerably hastened in consequence of it.

In the same year Reynolds produced the so much celebrated picture of Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy, to which there could not be a much higher compliment paid than in the opening of the Epilogue to the "Brothers," by Cumberland.

> "Who but hath seen the celebrated strife,
> Where Reynolds calls the canvas into life,
> And 'twixt the Tragic and the Comic muse,
> Courted of both, and dubious which to choose,
> Th' immortal actor stands."——

For this picture the Earl of Halifax paid three hundred guineas; but it has since been purchased, by Mr. Angerstein, for two hundred and fifty.

Mr. Garrick's intimacy with Reynolds had been now formed for some years, and it continued until the close of the former's life; of course I had many opportunities of observing that great actor, and of acquiring a few anecdotes about him.

To give to all these their due chronological order would be an unnecessary precision; I shall,

therefore, insert some of them in the present place, from their being particularly connected with the subject of this biography.

David Garrick sat many times to Mr. Reynolds for different portraits. At one of those sittings he gave a very lively account of his having sat once for his portrait to an indifferent painter, whom he wantonly teazed; for when the artist had worked on the face till he had drawn it very correctly as he saw it at that time, Garrick caught an opportunity, whilst the painter was not looking at him, totally to change his countenance and expression, when the poor painter patiently worked on to alter the picture, and make it like what he then saw; and when Garrick perceived that it was thus altered, he seized another opportunity, and changed his countenance to a third character, which, when the poor tantalized artist perceived, he, in a great rage, threw down his pallet and pencils on the floor, saying, he believed he was painting from the devil, and would do no more to the picture.

As a contrast to the foregoing anecdote of Garrick, I remember that Mrs. Yates, the famous tragedian, when she sat for her portrait to Reynolds, said to him, "I always endeavour to keep the same expression and countenance when I sit to you, Sir; and, therefore, I generally direct my thoughts to one and the same subject."

Once, when the Bishop of St. Asaph was sitting to Reynolds, the conversation turning on

Garrick, the Bishop asked him, how it was that Garrick had not been able to make any excellent players with all his instructions? Mr. Reynolds's answer was—"Partly because they all imitate him, and then it becomes impossible: as this is like a man's resolving to go always behind another; and whilst this resolution lasts, it renders it impossible he should ever be on a par with him."

Reynolds had it long in contemplation to paint a picture of an extensive composition, purposely to display the various powers of David Garrick as an actor. The principal figure in the front was to have been a full length of Garrick, in his own proper habit, in the action of speaking a prologue, surrounded by groups of figures representing him in all the different characters, by personifying which he had gained fame on the stage.

This scheme Reynolds described to Garrick at the time he was painting his portrait; and Garrick expressed great pleasure when he heard it, and seemed to enjoy the idea prodigiously, saying, "That will be the very thing I desire; the only way, by G——, that I can be handed down to posterity."

It is much to be regretted, however, that this picture was never begun, as, from such a hand, the work would have been invaluable, supposing it even to have been left in an unfinished state. But we may conclude that Reynolds, on mature

consideration, foresaw that the subject was not eminently calculated to make a good composition for a picture.

On Sunday mornings there was always a kind of public levee at Mr. Garrick's house, where, at one time or other, all the most illustrious characters of the kingdom might be seen. On one of those public mornings, Mr. B—— W——, an eminent painter, paid a visit to Mr. Garrick, and took with him his little daughter, telling her beforehand, that he would carry her to see the greatest stage player in the world. When they were in the room, and in the midst of this splendid company, the child ran up to her father, and speaking with a voice sufficiently audible to be heard by every one there, said, "Father, father, be all these folks that I see here stage-players?" Her father was not a little disconcerted at the child's abrupt question.

Another instance of the naiveté of genius I remember, but which is much more in character than the antics practised by Goldsmith.

Garrick one day dining with a large company, soon after dinner left the room, and it was supposed had left the house; but one of the party, on going into the area to seek him, found Mr. Garrick, who had been there some time, fully occupied in amusing a negro boy who was a servant in the family, by mimicking the manner and noise of a turkey cock, which diverted the boy to

such a degree that he was convulsed with laughter, and only able now and then to utter, "Oh, Masser Garrick! You will kill me, Masser Garrick!"

When Garrick once complained to Reynolds of the daily sarcasms with which he was annoyed from Foote, the comedian, Mr. Reynolds answered, that Foote, in so doing, gave the strongest proofs possible of sensibly feeling his own inferiority; as it was always the lesser man who condescended to become malignant and abusive.

Dr. Mudge, when in Garrick's company at Mount Edgecumbe, heard him say, that his regard for his mother's peace and happiness prevented him from appearing on the stage till after her death; and that he imagined this circumstance greatly contributed to the vast success he had met with; for being then turned of thirty, his judgement was more mature, and occasioned his avoiding many errors which he might have run into had he begun earlier in life.

I also remember to have heard old Dr. Chauncey say, at Reynolds's table, that he saw Garrick at his first appearance on the stage in Goodman's-fields, at which time he was infinitely more excellent, more purely natural than afterwards, when he had acquired many stage tricks and bad habits.

I shall here close these anecdotes with a curious, though rather too severe a criticism on the manner of Garrick's performing the part of King Richard the

Third. On the morning after Garrick had appeared in that part, Gibbon the historian called on Reynolds, when he mentioned his having been at the play on the preceding evening, and immediately began to criticise Garrick's manner of acting that character. He said he thought that he gave it, in the first scenes, a mean, creeping, vulgar air, totally failing in the expression of a prince; and in the latter part so very different a cast, that it did not seem to be the same person, and therefore not in harmony as a whole.

I have had repeated occasion to record Reynolds's sentiments concerning painting; and I may add, with respect to the practice of the art, that it was his remark, that a picture given by the painter as a present was seldom considered, by the person who received it, as of much value; whilst, on the contrary, those paid for are esteemed, as their value is thereby ascertained.

That the number of gratuitous portraits by Reynolds has not been very great may therefore be accounted for upon this principle, though he did not hesitate occasionally to employ his pencil for his immediate friends: and, sometime about the year 1762, he displayed a playful yet elegant idea in a present which he made to Dr. Mudge, of the portrait of his eldest son, then about sixteen years of age, who was a clerk in the navy office in London, and of course a considerable distance from his father, who resided at Plymouth.

This portrait was painted unknown to the Doctor; and, being intended for an agreeable suprize to him, young Mudge was represented as suddenly discovering himself by drawing aside a curtain, and looking out of the canvas upon the spectator, as an unexpected visitor. The picture is exquisitely painted, and one of Reynolds's finest productions.

Shortly after, this portrait was presented to Dr. Mudge.

In the autumn of the year 1762, Mr. Reynolds having impaired his health by incessant application to his profession, again paid a visit to his native county, accompanied by his friend Dr. Johnson, with whom he was entertained at the seats of several noblemen and gentlemen in the west of England.

During their stay at Plymouth, they were the guests of Dr. John Mudge, who was then a surgeon, and afterwards an eminent physician of that town; a man whose virtues and various powers of mind, if described, would occupy a much larger space than I shall presume to give them in this short memoir.

Mr. Reynolds's friendship for the whole family, and the interest he took in whatever related to them, were of the liveliest kind. This acquaintance with the Mudges, both father and son, ought to be reckoned amongst the earliest of his literary connections.

Yet though I refrain to give way to my own grateful and friendly feelings towards this family, I hope I shall be excused in recording the testimonies of two such good judges of human nature as Burke and Johnson, upon this very subject.

In a letter which the former wrote to Mr. Malone, in the year 1797, and which I here quote from its intimate connection with the subject of my biography, he speaks of how much Reynolds owed to the writings and conversation of Johnson; adding, that "nothing shows more the greatness of Sir Joshua's* parts than his taking advantage of both, and making some application of them to his profession; when Johnson neither understood, nor desired to understand, any thing of painting, and had no distinct idea of its nomenclature, even in those parts which had got most into use in common life. But though Johnson had done much to enlarge and strengthen his habit of thinking, Sir Joshua did not owe his first rudiments of speculation to him. He has always told me that he owed his first disposition to generalize, and to view things in the abstract, to old Mr. Zachariah Mudge, Prebendary of Exeter, and father of the celebrated mechanic of that name. I have myself," adds Mr. Burke, "seen Mr. Mudge the clergyman at Sir Joshua's house. He was a learned and venerable old man; and, as I thought, very much conversant in the Platonic

* This letter was written after Reynolds had been knighted.

philosophy, and very fond of that method of philosophizing. He had been originally a dissenting minister; a description which at that time bred very considerable men, both among those who adhered to it, and those who left it. He had entirely cured himself of the unpleasant narrowness which in the early part of his life had distinguished those gentlemen, and was perfectly free from the ten times more dangerous enlargement which has been, since then, their general characteristic. Sir Joshua Reynolds had always a great love for the whole of that family, and took a great interest in whatever related to them."

In addition to this, I shall insert from the periodical obituary of the day, a high eulogy bestowed upon the same individual by Johnson himself, on his demise in the year 1769. He speaks of him as "the Reverend Mr. Zachariah Mudge, prebendary of Exeter, and vicar of St. Andrew's in Plymouth;* a man equally eminent for his virtues and abilities, and at once beloved as a companion and reverenced as a pastor. He had that general curiosity to which no kind of knowledge is indifferent or superfluous, and that general benevolence by which no order of men is despised or hated.

"His principles, both of thought and action,

* The Reverend Zachariah Mudge was father to Mr. Thomas Mudge, the eminent mechanic, and also to Dr. John Mudge of Plymouth.

were great and comprehensive. By a solicitous examination of objections, and judicious comparison of opposite arguments, he attained what inquiry never gives but to industry and perspicuity, a firm and unshaken settlement of conviction. But his firmness was without asperity; for knowing with how much difficulty truth was sometimes found, he did not wonder that many missed it.

"The general course of his life was determined by his profession; he studied the sacred volumes in the original languages; with what diligence and success, his Notes upon the Psalms give sufficient evidence. He once endeavoured to add the knowledge of Arabic to that of Hebrew; but finding his thoughts too much diverted from other studies, after some time desisted from his purpose.

"His discharge of parochial duties was exemplary. How his sermons were composed, may be learned from the excellent volume which he has given to the public; but how they were delivered can be known only to those who heard them; for, as he appeared in the pulpit, words will not easily describe him. His delivery, though unconstrained was not negligent, and though forcible was not turbulent; disdaining anxious nicety of emphasis and laboured artifice of action, it captivated the hearer by its natural dignity, it roused the sluggish and fixed the volatile, and detained the mind upon the subject without directing it to the speaker.

"The grandeur and solemnity of the preacher did not intrude upon his general behaviour; at the table of his friends he was a companion, communicative and attentive, of unaffected manners, of manly cheerfulness, willing to please, and easy to be pleased. His acquaintance was universally solicited, and his presence obstructed no enjoyment which religion did not forbid. Though studious, he was popular; though inflexible, he was candid; and though metaphysical, yet orthodox."

Such was the obituary testimony of Johnson to the memory of a man, equally and deservedly dear both to himself and to Reynolds!

In addition to this, I have myslf heard Reynolds declare, that the elder Mr. Mudge was, in his opinion, the wisest man he had ever met with in his life; and so great an admirer was he of his literary works, that he had intended to have republished his Sermons, which were out of print; and also to have written a sketch of his life and character.—Pity it was not done by one who could have done it so well!

To return to our narrative:—Some of the occurrences which took place during this tour have been already narrated by Mr. Boswell, who informs us, that Mr. Reynolds and his friend were not only shewn every thing relative to the Dock-yard, and other parts of the naval establishment at Plymouth, with a degree of sedulous and polite atten-

tion on the part of the commissioner, but that the same officer also accommodated them with his yacht, a particular act of courtesy, for the purpose of a marine trip to the Eddystone light-house; which, however, they were prevented from examining with accuracy, from the tempestuous state of the weather.

It was about this time I first saw Reynolds, but I had seen several of his works which were in Plymouth, (for at that time I had never been out of the county,) and those pictures filled me with wonder and delight, although I was then very young; insomuch, that I remember when Mr. Reynolds was pointed out to me at a public meeting, where a great crowd was assembled, I got as near to him as I could from the pressure of the people, to touch the skirt of his coat, which I did with great satisfaction to my mind.

During their stay at Plymouth, Dr. Mudge, in conversation with Johnson, mentioned a circumstance which occurred in a most curious mode of trial, to which a friend of his, a man of undoubted veracity, had been an eye witness: Dr. Johnson desired to have it related to him by the person who saw it; on which, the gentleman being introduced to the Doctor, he repeated the circumstances, which were these:—

In some part of the East Indies, one of the natives was suspected of murder, and the mode taken to prove either his guilt or innocence was this. The

suspected criminal was brought guarded, and his hands bound, to a public place prepared for the trial, where was a large fire, over which was a cauldron of melted lead: into this vessel of melted lead he was forced to dip his naked hand, which, if he was innocent of the supposed crime, it was concluded, would receive no injury from the burning metal; but if guilty, would be destroyed. All the officers of the English man-of-war then in the harbour, and of which the gentleman who related it was the purser, were present at this extraordinary manner of trial; and the gentleman averred, that he distinctly saw the prisoner dip his hand into the melted lead, taking up some in his palm, and leisurely spilling it on the ground at his feet, without any apparent injury, or even pain to his hand. One of the English officers present had the curiosity to put a small stick, which he held in his hand, into the cauldron, and on taking it out again, found the part which had been immersed in the metal nearly consumed.

Dr. Johnson heard the narrative with much attention, and declared he would most willingly take a voyage to the East Indies, if he could be insured to be a witness to such a sight.

If there was any juggling in this affair, it cannot now be detected; but the person who saw it was unable to account for it, and the credulity of Dr. Johnson made him a very fit man to relate this story to.

During this pleasant trip to Plymouth, Reynolds, accompanied by Dr. Johnson, paid a visit to a neighbouring gentleman, when Johnson's singularity of conduct produced considerable alarm in the mind of their host; who, in order to gratify his guests, had placed before them every delicacy which the house afforded.

On this occasion, the Doctor, who seldom shewed much discretion in his feeding, devoured so large a quantity of new honey and of clouted cream, which is peculiar to Devonshire, besides drinking large potations of new cyder, that the entertainer found himself much embarrassed between his anxious regard for the Doctor's health, and his fear of breaking through the rules of politeness, by giving him a hint on the subject.

The strength of Johnson's constitution, however, saved him from any unpleasant consequences which might have been expected; but his companion, Reynolds, was more discreet in his appetite, and was much better gratified by a present for his professional palate, which their host made him of a large jar of very old nut oil, grown fat by length of time, as it had belonged to an ancestor of the family. This prize Reynolds most eagerly took home with him in the carriage, regarding it as deserving of his own personal attention.

Mr. Reynolds having completed his pleasant trip, and succeeded, in a great measure, in the restoration of his health, he returned to the metro-

polis and to the practice of his art; indeed, the true enjoyment of a profession Reynolds possessed in as great a degree, perhaps, as any man ever did; he never was so happy as in those hours which he passed in his painting room. He has often confessed, that when he has complied with the invitations of the nobility to spend a few days of relaxation with them at their country residences, though every luxury was afforded which the heart could desire, yet he always returned home like one who had been kept so long without his natural food.

Reynolds used to say, that "the pupil in art, who looks for the Sunday with pleasure as an idle day, will never make a painter."

None of his hours were ever spent in idleness, or lost in dissipation; and on those evenings which he spent at home, after his daily occupation was past, he employed himself in looking over, and studying from, the prints of the old masters, of which he had procured a fine collection.

He was, however, happy in the friendly society of a few amiable individuals, with whom his evenings were sometimes spent; and amongst those the Cotterells were still numbered, at whose house Johnson and he had been frequent visitors.

In a letter from Johnson to Baretti, written in December, after the return of the two friends to the metropolis, the former says, "Reynolds still continues to increase in reputation and riches.

Miss Cotterell is still with Mrs. Porter. Miss Charlotte is married to Dean Lewis, and has three children." And in a subsequent letter, he adds, "Miss Cotterell still continues to cling to Mrs. Porter. Mr. Reynolds gets 6000 a-year."

1763.

ÆTAT. 39.

Mr. Reynolds's practice was now become so great, that he found it necessary to have pupils to assist in the minor parts of his profession, of which number the first after Marchi was Mr. Beech, a native of Dorsetshire, and soon after Mr. Berridge was placed under his tuition; this gentleman was born in Lincolnshire: and his fourth pupil was Mr. Hugh Barron, whose early promise and final failure may serve as a warning to others. This person was a native of the metropolis, and born somewhere near Soho, in which vicinity his father had an official situation in the Westminster Dispensary, as apothecary to that establishment. He was placed with Mr. Reynolds, with whom he continued several years; and, on leaving him, attempted his profession as a portrait painter in the capital: but the desire of improving himself in the art induced him to visit Italy in 1773, to which country, like Reynolds he took the maritime route, and like him called at Lisbon on his way.

He made some stay there, practising his art, being much patronized by the English factory

both there and at Oporto, and then proceeded on his voyage: he seems to have been long a sojourner at the seat of the arts, principally at Rome and at Genoa, returning to England not until 1778. His first residence in London was in his old master's immediate neighbourhood, but he did not remain there long; and is since dead, (in 1791,) at the age of middle life. This person was in some degree an instance of misapplied talents; for though, as Mr. Edwards records, he was the best amateur performer of his day on the violin, yet he was never much esteemed as a painter, notwithstanding the early promise which he gave of graphic excellence whilst a youth, at the drawing-school, under the tuition of Fournier, some time about the year 1764.

His younger brother, William, about the year 1775, produced a view of Wanstead House, which was engraved by Picot, and dedicated to Sir Joshua; further particulars of him will be found in Edwards.

The instance of Mr. Barron proves the ill effects of talent when dissipated; for being divided between music and painting, he in the end became master of neither: the brevity of human life affords not time to conquer even one of those sciences, as

> "One science only will one genius fit,
> So vast is art, so small is human wit;
> Not only bounded to peculiar arts,
> But oft in those confined to single parts."

1764.

ÆTAT. 40.

At his hours of leisure Mr. Reynolds considered it necessary to his mental improvement, as well as to his professional interest, to mix in learned and convivial society; and about this time, in order not only to enjoy it with freedom, but also more particularly with the kind intention of gratifying his venerable friend, he became the proposer, and with the assistance of Johnson was the founder, of that club, still perhaps in existence, and for many years denominated the "*Literary Club*." This, however, was a title which they did not arrogate to themselves; a thing, indeed, in which Reynolds would have been the last person to join. Literary fame was but a secondary object to himself, which, if he could have acquired it, he must have shared with multitudes innumerable, and that too in a department where a decided superiority is not granted to any one in particular; besides he was too much absorbed in his professional pursuits, in which he aimed at standing alone in his own country, at least, without a rival.

His literary efforts were, therefore, merely an occasional employment, and to him only necessary as a means, in addition to his graphic works, to convey instruction: yet some judges of litera-

ture consider the former to be so much beyond what might have been expected from him, that they are very unwilling to allow them to be his own production, as I shall have cause to notice more than once. But if it were possible that those critics could ever be made sensible of his great and peculiar merits as a painter, they would surely find themselves obliged to grant him the minor ability of being able to have composed his own discourses.

If it were necessary to add any thing else to prove that he arrogated not to himself any literary eminence from the title given to that club of which he was one of the founders, it might be remarked that at that period he had only written his three papers in Johnson's Idler, wherefore all his possible claims to a literary character were very small, and but little known.

So far, indeed, was Mr. Reynolds from assuming the character of being a man of literature, or a wit, that I remember on his reading in a morning paper an account of a dinner given by one of his friends to a party *of wits*, as it was expressed, all of whose names were mentioned, and his own amongst the rest, he exclaimed, "Why have they named me amongst them as a wit? I never was a wit in my life!"

Reynolds as a public character, had, of course, frequent invitations, and was not an infrequent visitor at public entertainments.

I have heard him relate an anecdote of a venison feast, at which were assembled many who much enjoyed the repast.

On this occasion, Reynolds addressed his conversation to one of the company who sat next to him, but to his great surprise could not get a single word in answer, until at length his silent neighbour, turning to him, said, "Mr. Reynolds, whenever you are at a venison feast, I advise you not to speak during dinner time, as in endeavouring to answer your questions, I have just swallowed a fine piece of the fat, entire, without tasting its flavour!"

The epicures of convivial society, or the pedants of the literary, were to him equally subjects of his contemplation, but as in his literary intercourse he often met with men of first rate genius, he naturally was solicitous of their intimacy and friendship.

Whilst writing the life of the founder of the literary club, it will not be considered as out of place briefly to notice the original design which, as first declared at its institution, in February, 1764, was to confine the club to twelve members, consisting of Sir Joshua, then only Mr. Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Drs. Goldsmith, Nugent, and Percy, afterwards Bishop of Dromore, Sir Robert Chambers and Sir John Hawkins, with Messrs. Burke, Langton, Chamier, Dyer, and the Honourable Topham Beauclerk.

These were friends so judiciously selected, as Mr. Malone observes, and were men of such talents and so well known to each other, that any two of them, if they should not happen to be joined by any more, might be good company for each other. Such was the beginning of a society which has now existed for half a century, boasting of having had enrolled, on its list of members, many of the most celebrated characters of the last century.

Sir John Hawkins though he does not expressly mention Mr. Reynolds as the founder, has, notwithstanding, entered more into detail on this subject than either Mr. Boswell or Mr. Malone; he observes, speaking of Dr. Johnson in the preceding year, (1763,) that he had now considerably extended the circle of his acquaintance, and had added to the number of his friends sundry persons of distinguished eminence; amongst whom he enumerates Reynolds and some others of the original members, and he then enters more minutely into those principles which must have weighed much with the founder, when he first thought of the plan: for he adds, that from Johnson's delight in convivial meetings, his love of conversation, and his sensible feeling of the attractions of a tavern, it was but natural that he should wish for frequent opportunities of indulging them in a way that would free him from domestic restraint, from the observance of hours, and from a conformity to family regulations. "A tavern was the place for

these enjoyments, and a weekly club was instituted for his gratification, and the mutual entertainment and delight of its several members. The first movers in this association were Johnson and Reynolds; the place of meeting was the Turk's Head in Gerard-street; the day, Monday in every week; and the hour of assembling seven, in the evening. Our evening toast," continues Sir John, "was *Esto perpetua*. A lady, distinguished by her beauty and taste for literature, (Mrs. Montague,) invited us two successive years to a dinner at her house; curiosity was her motive, and possibly a desire of intermingling with our conversation the charms of her own. She affected to consider us as a set of literary men, and perhaps gave the first occasion for distinguishing the society by the name of the *Literary Club*, a distinction which it never assumed to itself."

Mr. Boswell records an opinion of Sir Joshua's on the subject of conversation, which may be noticed in this place. When it had been proposed to add some members to the Literary Club, Goldsmith had said in favour of it, that it would give the club an agreeable variety, that there could now be nothing new among the members, and that they had travelled over each other's minds; to which Johnson answered, "Sir, you have not travelled over *my* mind I promise you!" When Reynolds was afterwards told of this, he agreed with Goldsmith, saying that "when people have lived a

great deal together, they know what each of them will say on the subject. A new understanding, therefore, is desirable; because, though it may only furnish the same sense upon a question which would have been furnished by those with whom we are accustomed to live, yet this sense will have a different colouring; and colouring is of much effect in every thing else as well as in painting."

I have not specifically noticed the admirable whole length picture which Reynolds painted of the late Mrs. Abington in the character of the Comic Muse, and which is now in the possession of the Dorset family;* but I may here observe, that Mrs. Abington was not only by far the most eminent performer in comedy of her day, and therefore most proper to be the representative of Thalia, but has perhaps never been surpassed in any time. She was also esteemed at that period as a person of most exquisite taste, and, like a woman of superior abilities, had ever a great ambition to be noticed by men eminent for their genius; therefore on her benefit nights she always endeavoured to collect as many distinguished persons, particularly of this Literary Club, as was in her power, in order to add dignity to her audience, taking care to place them in the most conspicuous situation in the house.

* Placed in the gallery at Knole Park, which contains a curious collection of portraits of eminent persons of all descriptions.

Accordingly Mr. Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith, Edmund Burke, and many others of like eminence, rarely failed attending her performances on such evenings, in which her favourite character was that of Estifania, in "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife."

She, however, much offended Goldsmith, at last, by refusing to take the part which he had written on purpose for her, in his Comedy of "She stoops to Conquer," which character was, of necessity, performed by another actress, to Goldsmith's great mortification, on the first night's representation.

Having thus slightly noticed matters that may be considered as events not wholly unimportant in the life of Reynolds, I may further add of this year, as connected with the arts, that in the month of April was opened the exhibition of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, at the Great Room in Spring Gardens, as it had been in the two preceding years, but now with an addition of many of those exhibitors, who, until this period, had continued annually to exhibit at the original place, the great room belonging to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, then situated nearly opposite to Beaufort Buildings in the Strand. But that society finding that the artists who had intended to continue with them began to diminish in numbers, and also that their exhibition interfered with the other con-

cerns of the society, they no longer indulged them with the use of their room, and consequently the exhibitions at that place terminated in that year.

This extended and ample exhibition at Spring Gardens had, however, originated from the union of all the artists in the metropolis, as before noticed, in the year 1760; and the success of their exhibitions having given them sufficient encouragement, they now also seriously proposed to incorporate themselves, and accordingly drew up a plan of a charter, at that time, which was granted to them in the following year.

It may not be foreign to my purpose, for the information of general readers, to take some notice of the royal charter of incorporation of this establishment, particularly as it has been entirely passed over by former biographers.

This charter then was given to the "Society of Artists of Great Britain," to consist of a president, vice-president, directors, and fellows, to be for ever after a body corporate, with perpetual succession, and with power to enjoy lands in perpetuity, either by purchase or devise, to the yearly value of £1000, notwithstanding the statute of mortmain. Their arms, or corporation seal, consisted of azure, a brush, a chissel, and a pair of compasses, composed fretty, or; over these, in chief, a regal crown proper. This coat had two supporters: on the dexter side, Britannia; on the sinister, Concord. The crest was on a wreath, an oak branch, and a

palm branch in saltire, and in the centre of these, a chaplet of laurel. This common seal too, a thing very unusual in heraldic grants, they had liberty to break, alter, or change the same, from time to time, as they thought fit.

It was further stipulated, that all the officers, together with the directors, should be either painters, sculptors, architects, or engravers, by profession.

The charter further authorized them to hold meetings for the better improvement of those arts, in London, or within ten miles thereof, as often as it might be necessary.

Mr. Lambert was the first president, and Mr. Hayman his vice; Messrs. Dalton and Newton were the first treasurer and secretary; the other members of the direction were Sir William Chambers, Messrs. Mac Ardell, Barret, Collins, Cotes, Grignion, Gwyn, Hone, Meyer, Moser, Payne, Penny, Rooker, Sandby, Seaton, Tyler, Wall, Wilson, Wilton, and Yeo.

As the events which gave rise to this establishment are intimately connected with the present Royal Academy, in its progress and foundation, I cannot give a better view of them, in part, than is afforded by the slight sketch drawn up in the year 1766, by Mr. John Gwyn, an ingenious architectural writer, in his "London and Westminster Improved."

He observes, that Sir Peter Lely and Sir God-

frey Kneller kept up the national passion with great success; and some public works, which required decorations, gave opportunity to Sir James Thornhill and others, to shew, that historical painting, if properly encouraged, was a field in which the British nation might engage with their competitors, not without advantage: but notwithstanding this advancement of the art of painting, and the number of ingenious professors who continually advanced in every branch, neither painting, nor professors of painting, were known, distinguished, or encouraged. The few, indeed, who had taste and discernment, sought for these ingenious men, and purchased their works; but the public knew them not, nor did they know each other: they had no society or intercourse with their fellow artists, consequently had very little to say in each other's recommendation, in the different branches of painting; and he who had the greatest acquaintance, whatever were his abilities, was sure to get the most money. However, the natural good sense and ingenuity of the British nation continued still to furnish very able masters; and these, at length, collected their scattered and dispersed brethren, and formed a little society, who, wisely considering their mutual interest, by a voluntary subscription among themselves, established an academy in St. Martin's-lane.

The establishment of the Foundling Hospital, which was a national concern, and attracted the

notice of the public in a very particular manner, gave an opportunity, when finished, for displaying a scene entirely new to this nation. The Hospital was just in its infancy, and elegant decorations, and every possible means that could allure or draw the attention of the public towards its support and maintenance, were found necessary; but the expense of such ornaments could not be afforded by a charity whose utmost abilities were demanded for the succour and support of deserted perishing infants. In order to contribute to the support of this useful establishment, and to shew at once that ingenuity and compassion for the distresses of human nature are usually found to reside in the same person, the most considerable artists in Great Britain nobly and generously united in bestowing a great number of excellent performances, in painting and sculpture, which embellished the Hospital, entertained the public, and, at the same time convinced the world that painting was arrived to a degree of perfection in this kingdom, of which, until this era, they had no conception. The Governors of the Hospital, convinced of the use and benefit which accrued to the charity from these truly valuable donations, and desirous of improving a connection so very advantageous to them, encouraged the several contributors, and also the whole body of those who professed the polite arts, to have an annual meeting at the Hospital, on the fifth of November: these meetings drew together

the most ingenious artists from every quarter, and at one of them it was proposed to the whole body, to have an annual exhibition of such performances as should be judged worthy the notice of the public.

A proposal so very advantageous to merit of every kind, could not fail of being received with applause, and was unanimously agreed to. In consequence of this resolution, application was made to the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, who, taking it into consideration, rightly judged, that an exhibition of this nature could not be carried into execution with so much propriety as under their patronage; they complied, therefore, willingly, with this request, and, in the year 1760, the first exhibition of the artists of Great Britain was made, and another the year following; but as every member of the society was at liberty to distribute what number of tickets for admittance he thought fit, that which was intended only as a polite entertainment and rational amusement for the public, became a scene of tumult and disorder; and to such a height was the rage of visiting the exhibition carried, that, when the members themselves had satisfied their own curiosity, the room was crowded, during the hours allotted for the exhibition, with menial servants and their acquaintance. This prostitution of the polite arts undoubtedly became extremely disagreeable to the professors themselves, who heard,

alike, with indignation, their works censured or approved by kitchen-maids and stable-boys; but the cause of the final separation, (for this abuse might have been remedied,) of the artists of Great Britain from the Society, was this: it had been, and still is, usual for the Society to give premiums for historical and landscape painting; these rewards were usually adjudged among the competitors some little time before the exhibition began, and as those who gained the premiums were obliged to leave their pictures a limited time with the Society, they were, of course, sure to be in the exhibition. The great inconvenience of this method of proceeding was soon discovered by several of the most eminent painters, whose reputations were already so eminently established as to prevent their becoming candidates for a trifling premium; these, therefore, as their characters were so nearly concerned, very justly objected to the continuation of this custom, for the following obvious reason: it was generally known that the Society had determined premiums for several pictures, and it was natural enough for persons who knew nothing of the matter to inquire, upon entering the room, which of the pieces, among that profusion of art, were those that had obtained the premium? and, being satisfied in this particular, they very innocently concluded, for want of better judgement, that these had obtained the prize from *all* the rest, and, consequently, were the *best* pictures. Had

it been possible to have confined this injurious decision to the vulgar spectators, it would have been a thing of no consequence; but, unfortunately for the arts, many in a much higher sphere of life were liable to be led away by the same opinion; and therefore, as the society would not give up the point, a separation ensued, and every succeeding exhibition has been made at the room in Spring Gardens. The prodigious encouragement given to it, and the applause bestowed on the several performances, by persons of the greatest taste and distinction, evidently shew what a prodigious progress has been made in the arts, as well as what great expectations may be formed of what will probably be done by concurring incitements of applause and emulation, and the effects of society and concord. The success of the exhibition, and the harmony which subsisted among the exhibitors, naturally led them to the thoughts of soliciting an establishment, and forming themselves into a body: in consequence of which solicitation, his Majesty was most graciously pleased to grant them his Royal Charter, incorporating them by the name of the Society of Artists of Great Britain; which charter bears date the 26th day of January, 1765, and is the one of which I have given the preceding sketch.

In the summer of this year a violent and very dangerous illness attacked Mr. Reynolds, which had nearly deprived his associates of one of

the best of friends, and the world of one of its brightest ornaments.

His illness, however, was but of short duration, and his recovery was cheered by the following affectionate letter from Dr. Johnson, then on a visit in Northamptonshire:

"TO JOSHUA REYNOLDS, ESQ., IN LEICESTER-FIELDS, LONDON.

"DEAR SIR,

"I did not hear of your sickness, till I heard, likewise, of your recovery, and therefore escaped that part of your pain which every man must feel to whom you are known as you are known to me. Having had no particular account of your disorder, I know not in what state it has left you. If the amusement of my company can exhilarate the languor of a slow recovery, I will not delay a day to come to you; for I know not how I can so effectually promote my own pleasure as by pleasing you, or my own interest as by preserving you; in whom, if I should lose you, I should lose almost the only man whom I call a friend. Pray let me hear of you from yourself, or from dear Miss Reynolds. Make my compliments to Mr. Mudge.* "I am, dear Sir,

"Your most affectionate, and

"Most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

"At the Rev. Mr. Percy's, at Easton-Maudit,
"Northamptonshire, (by Castle Ashby) August 19, 1764."

* Mr. Mudge happened to be at that time in London on a visit.

In 1764, the world and the art lost Hogarth, who died on the 26th of October, at the age of sixty-seven.

At the time, a silly report was propagated by a party, that his death was accelerated by that most severe and cruel poetical epistle, addressed to him by the well known Charles Churchill in consequence of a quarrel that took place from a difference of opinion in politics. In that satire, the poet supposes Hogarth to be in his dotage, and with affected pity laments his fallen state and loss of powers, and concludes with a compliment to Reynolds, saying,

> "The greatest genius to this fate may bow,
> Reynolds, in time, may be like Hogarth now!"

I may add, that this illustrious painter had a weakness, from which, indeed, even the great Shakespeare was not exempt, that of a fondness for a pun; one specimen of which I have heard related by Reynolds.

A party of painters, of whom Hogarth was one, were looking at a picture painted by Allan Ramsay, but were not able to ascertain who was the artist, being all in doubt, with the exception of Hogarth, who soon set them right, by saying, "Don't you see clearly in the picture the Ram's eye?"

Another of his foibles, it is well known, was the excessive high opinion he held of his own abilities;

for when he was engaged in his work of the *Marriage à la mode*, he said to Reynolds, "I shall very soon be able to gratify the world with such a sight as they have never seen equalled!"

Hogarth has never been admitted to rank high as a painter, but certainly so as a moralist; yet it has, of late, been discovered, that his small pictures possess considerable dexterity of execution: as to his large pieces, they appear to be the efforts of imbecility; he was totally without the practice required for such works.

The best lesson, indeed the only one I believe, by which we can learn to paint small pictures in a grand style, is, first to gain experience by executing well in the full size of nature, or even larger; and as a proof of this assertion, it may be remarked that there are no instances now to be found in the world of any small pictures possessing the true properties of the grand style, except by those painters who have been accustomed to work on a large scale: for it is only in large pictures that the indispensable necessity exists of marking out with precision and distinctness all the parts; such precision as is not to be found nor required in the smaller size, as small pictures never proceed much beyond sketches. This is the true reason why those, who are painters of small pictures only, cannot paint in a large size.

Nothing in art is more distinguishable than the difference between the small pictures by the pain-

ters of large works, and the small pictures by those who never did any other kind, or had never practised in works of the full size of nature: and so convinced have I always been of this as a truth, that, from the mortifying reflection that small pictures only are saleable and commodious in this country, I have often thought it advisable, in respect to worldly advantage, to execute such; but in that case to follow this severe and laborious method; that is, first, to finish the subject in the full size of life, and afterwards copy it in small, by which means may be obtained that style of breadth and grandeur to be found in the pictures of great masters even when painted in a small size. The original may be then destroyed, if you please, it being an unprofitable article which nobody will purchase.

As an instance of the imbecility of those painters, when painting large pictures, who have been accustomed to paint only in a small size, there is now to be seen an attempt by Nicolo Poussin. The subject of the picture is the martyrdom of St. Erasmus; and it is placed in one of the smaller Chapels of St. Peter's Church at Rome. The figures are the full size of life: but this picture is executed in so little a manner, and without those broad masses of light and shadow so absolutely necessary to give distinctness and effect to a picture when seen from a distance, that it appears weak and indistinct when viewed beyond the steps

of the altar, and the spectator is puzzled to discover what is the subject, or even one figure from another: yet the picture is not without the merit of good drawing and anatomical knowledge.

But with regard to familiar scenes, Dutch drolls, and comic subjects of every kind, they ought, on no account or pretence whatsoever, to assume a size of any magnitude, as, by so doing, they give up their interesting quality of a refined toy to become a nuisance; even in the rich luxuriance of Rubens in his Bacchanalian scenes, although executed with the highest powers of mechanic art, we cannot but view the subject with some degree of displeasure, from the impropriety of the size alone in which they are represented, as such subjects are only fitted for canvas of smaller dimensions.

1765.

ÆTAT. 41.

In 1765 Mr. Reynolds exhibited a whole length portrait of Lady Sarah Bunbury, in which she is represented as sacrificing to the Graces. Previous to this he had painted an excellent whole length portrait of Lady Elizabeth Keppel, in the dress she wore as bridemaid to the Queen;* and in the same exhibition he had another portrait of Lady

* Exhibited in the year 1762, at the Great Room, Spring Gardens.

Waldegrave; of which Mr. Barry, in a letter to Dr. Sleigh, says—"We have had two exhibitions since I wrote to you: the pictures that struck me most were Lady Sarah Bunbury sacrificing to the Graces, and Lady Waldegrave. They are some of Mr. Reynold's best works, which is the greatest character they can have."

Barry gives testimony in favour of Reynolds's merits, in another letter to Dr. Sleigh, written in the same year, which was soon after his arrival in London, for the first time, from his native kingdom, Ireland, wherein he says, "———To avoid too great a trespass on your patience, I proposed breaking off with taking notice of the great advance of portrait painting since it got into the hands of Mr. Reynolds; but as you have seen his pictures when you were in England, no one is more capable of discerning the greatness and delicacy of his style, the propriety of his characters, his great force of light and shadow, and taste of colouring."

Very soon after the above was written, Barry was enabled, by the munificence of the Burkes, to set out on his tour of France and Italy: and on another occasion, still in the same year, he wrote from Paris to Mr. Burke; when, whilst speaking of the paintings at Versailles, he said, "What I have seen since, gives me more and more reason to admire Mr. Reynolds: you know my sentiments of him already, and the more I know

and see of the art, the less likely they are to change."

As it may afford some idea of the degree in which the arts were, at this period, held by the public in England, I shall here give the following anecdote, in regard to historical painting.

It was not long after the arrival of Mr. West in this country, from his studies in Italy, that he displayed his powers in historical painting in a most excellent picture; the subject of which was that of Pylades and Orestes, one of his very best works.

As any attempt in history was, at that period, an almost unexampled effort, this picture became a matter of much surprise. His house was soon filled with visitors from all quarters to see it; and those amongst the highest rank, who were not able to come to his house to satisfy their curiosity, desired his permission to have it sent to them; nor did they fail, every time it was returned to him, to accompany it with compliments of the highest commendation on its great merits. But the most wonderful part of the story is, that, notwithstanding all this vast bustle and commendation, bestowed upon this justly admired picture, by which Mr. West's servant gained upwards of thirty pounds for showing it, yet no one mortal ever asked the price of the work, or so much as offered to give him a commission to paint any other subject. Indeed there was one gentleman so

highly delighted with the picture, and who spoke of it with such great praise to his father, that he immediately asked him the reason he did not purchase, as he so much admired it, when he answered—"What could I do, if I had it?—you would not surely have me hang up a modern English picture in my house, unless it was a portrait?"

It was in this year that Johnson's edition of Shakspeare made its appearance; and even for this the world is much obliged to Reynolds. Mr. Boswell tells us, that in 1756 the Doctor had resumed his scheme of giving that work with notes, and had even published proposals, in which he promised that it should be perfected by Christmas 1757, but that his habitual indolence had prevented him from pursuing the system of research necessary for such an undertaking. Sir John Hawkins also notices particularly that a reverend divine (Churchill) had exhibited him to ridicule in a satirical poem, and revived the remembrance of that engagement to the public, "which by this and other instances of the laxity of his mind, he seemed not inclined to fulfil."

This was about 1760; but, as Hawkins adds, although Johnson was insensible to the abuse, yet his friends took the alarm, and by all the arts of persuasion and reasoning, endeavoured to convince him that his credit was at stake, in having yet made no progress in a work, for which he had already taken subscriptions.

The true reason to be given for the delay of this work is, that Johnson had undertaken it at a period when he was obliged to be a literary drudge for his livelihood, and merely on account of the profits it would afford him:—but it never was an object of his desire. In the mean time, he became possessed of the pension of three hundred per annum from the bounty of his present Majesty, and therefore, that task, which before was undertaken from necessity only, now became loathsome to him, and he could not summon up sufficient resolution to go on with the work, although he had engaged himself to the public by having received subscriptions for it. He indeed confessed that he was culpable, and made promises, from time to time, that he would commence the necessary course of reading: but even now his best friends trembled for his fulfilment of these promises; nor was it until Reynolds, and some others of his friends, contrived to entangle him in a wager for its performance at a given period, that he could be prevailed to sit down to it in earnest. These friendly exertions, however, had the best effect, and at length, in 1765, the work was produced.

I make no doubt that Reynolds, in order to encourage Johnson in the business, at the same time offered to furnish him with a few notes on the text of Shakspeare, which he faithfully performed; and as these notes serve to show the clearness of

perception and mode of thinking in Reynolds, it is surely requisite to insert them in this place.

In Macbeth, act the first, scene the sixth, in the dialogue between the King and Banquo, is this passage—

King. "This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.
Ban. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
By his lov'd mansionry, that the heav'n's breath
Smells wooingly. Here is no jetty frieze,
Buttrice, nor coigne of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendant bed and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd
The air is delicate."

On which Reynolds observes, "This short dialogue between Duncan and Banquo, whilst they are approaching the gates of Macbeth's castle, has always appeared to me a striking instance of what in painting is termed *repose*. This conversation very naturally turns upon the beauty of its situation, and the pleasantness of the air; and Banquo, observing the martlets' nests in every recess of the cornice, remarks, that where those birds most breed and haunt the air is delicate. The subject of quiet and easy conversation gives that repose so necessary to the mind after the tumultuous bustle of the preceding scenes, and perfectly contrasts the scene of horror that immediately succeeds. It seems as if Shakspeare asked himself,

what is a prince likely to say to his attendants on such an occasion? Whereas, the modern writers seem, on the contrary, to be always searching for new thoughts—such as would never occur to men in the situation which is represented.—This, also, is frequently the practice of Homer, who, from the midst of battles and horrors, relieves and refreshes the mind of the reader, by introducing some quiet rural image, or picture of familiar domestic life."

On this note, the following observation has been made in a late edition by Mr. Malone, which, although expressing a difference of opinon, is yet highly complimentary to Reynolds.—"It is not without reluctance that I express my dissent from the friend whose name is subscribed to the preceding note; whose observations on all subjects of criticism and taste are so ingenious and just, that posterity may be at a loss to determine, whether his consummate skill and execution in his own art, or his judgement in that and other kindred arts, were superior."

In Othello, act first, scene third, the Duke says:

> "Let me speak like yourself; and lay a sentence,
> Which, as a grise or step, may help these lovers
> Into your favour."

The Duke then proceeds to repeat a variety of proverbs in rhyming distichs; on which Johnson says in a note, "The Duke seems to mean, when

he says he will speak like Brabantio, that he will speak sententiously."

But Reynolds was of opinion, that Shakspeare here meant something further; for Brabantio was father of Desdemona, and the Duke was endeavouring to reconcile him to her marriage with the Moor: he therefore adds, "i. e. let me speak as yourself would speak, were you not too much heated with passion."

Perhaps the Poet might have also wished to say, or to imply, "Hear me now say what you ought to say;—let me repeat those wise proverbs of which you are so fond, and whose wisdom ought now to regulate your feelings."

In the same scene Brabantio says:

> "But words are words; I never yet did hear
> That the bruis'd heart was *pierced* through the ear."

On this passage Warburton had observed, that "the Duke had, by sage sentences, been exhorting Brabantio to patience, and to forget the grief of his daughter's stolen marriage: to which Brabantio is made very pertinently to reply, to this effect, 'My Lord, I apprehend very well the wisdom of your advice; but though you would comfort me, words are but words; and the heart, already bruised, was never pierced, or wounded, through the ear.' It is obvious, that the text must be restored thus:

> That the bruised heart was pieced through the ear.

That is, that the wounds of sorrow were never cured, or a man made *heart-whole*, merely by the words of consolation."

Next comes Mr. Stevens, who treats the bruised heart first surgically, and then applies a black letter plaister to the wound. "Pierced may be right. The consequence of a bruise is sometimes matter collected, and this can no way be cured without *piercing* or letting it out. Thus in *Hamlet:*

> "It will but skin and film the ulcerous place.
> Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
> Infects unseen."

Again,

> "This is th' imposthume of much wealth and peace,
> That inward breaks, and shows no cause without,
> Why the man dies."

What reference these passages can possibly have to the point in question, I will not pretend to say; and indeed Mr. Stevens himself seems to have doubted there being a cure for this *imbroglio* of the bruised heart; he therefore adds—"Our author might have had in his memory the following quaint title of an old book; *i. e.* 'A Lytell Treatyse called the Dysputacyon, or the Complaynte of the Harte through perced with the lokynge of the eye. Imprinted at London, in Flete-strete, at ye sygne of the Sonne, by Wynkin de Worde.'

"Again, in a 'Newe and a Mery Interlude, concerning Pleasure and Payne in Love, made by Jhon Heywood: fol. Rastel. 1534.

"Thorough myne erys dyrently to myne harte
Percyth his wordys evyn lyke as many sperys."

After all this display of ingenuity and research, Reynolds expresses himself thus on the subject with simplicity and good sense.

"Shakspeare was continually changing his first expression for another, either stronger or more uncommon;* so that very often the reader who has not the same continuity, or succession of ideas, is at a loss for his meaning: many of Shakspeare's uncouth strained epithets may be explained by going back to the obvious and simple expression, which is most likely to occur to the mind in that state. I can imagine the first mode of expression that occurred to the poet was this:

"The *troubled* heart was never cured by words."

To give it poetical force he altered the phrase:

"The wounded heart was never reached through the ear."

Wounded heart he changed to *broken*, and that to *bruised*, as a more common expression. *Reached* he altered to *touched*, and the transition is then easy to *pierced; i. e.* throughly *touched:* when the sentiment is brought to this state, the commentator, without this unravelling clue, expounds *piercing the heart* in its common acceptation

* I cannot entirely agree with Reynolds, that Shakspeare was continually changing his first expression for another. It is said, and with more appearance of probability, that he never blotted out a line.

wounding the heart, which making in this place nonsense, is corrected to *pierced the heart*, which is very stiff, and, as Polonius says, *is a vile phrase*." This note seems to have been the foundation for Malone's subsequent, and more copious, illustration of the passage.

On a subsequent passage in the same play, in the first scene of the fourth act, where Othello, in his jealousy, exclaims, "Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction. It is no words that shake me thus—pish—noses, ears, and lips—is't possible!—confess!—handkerchief!—O devil!"—[*Falls in a trance*] Warburton says, that "The starts and broken reflections in this speech have something very terrible, and show the mind of the speaker to be in inexpressible agonies. But the words we are upon, when set right, have a sublime in them that can never be enough admired. The ridiculous blunder of writing *instruction* for *induction*, (for so it should be read,) has, indeed, sunk it into arrant nonsense. Othello is just going to fall into a swoon; and, as is common for people in that circumstance, feels an unusual mist and darkness, accompanied with horror, coming upon him. This, with vast sublimity of thought, is compared to the season of the sun's eclipse, at which time the earth becomes shadowed by the *induction* or bringing over of the moon between it and the sun. This being the allusion,

the reasoning stands thus—'My nature could never be thus overshadowed, and falling, as it were, into dissolution, for no cause. There must be an *induction* of something; there must be a real cause. My jealousy cannot be merely imaginary. Ideas, *words* only could not shake me thus, and raise all this disorder. My jealousy, therefore, must be grounded on matter of fact.'—Shakspeare uses the same word in the same sense in King Richard the Third:

"A dire induction am I witness to."

"Marston seems to have read it thus in some copy, and to allude to it in these words of Fame:

"Plots ha' you laid? inductions dangerous."

Reynolds, in his note upon this passage, observes, that, "However ingenious Dr. Warburton's note may be, it is certainly too forced and far-fetched. Othello alludes only to Cassio's dream, which had been invented and told him by Iago. When many confused and very interesting ideas pour in upon the mind all at once, and with such rapidity that it has not time to shape or digest them, if it does not relieve itself by tears, (which we know it often does, whether for joy or grief,) it produces stupefaction and fainting.

"Othello, in broken sentences, and single words, all of which have a reference to the cause of his jealousy, shews, that all the proofs are present at once to his mind, which so overpowers it, that he falls into a trance, the natural consequence."

1766.

ÆTAT. 42.

Doctor Farmer, of Cambridge, had written a most excellent and convincing pamphlet to prove that Shakspeare knew little or nothing of the ancients but by translations. Being in company with Dr. Johnson, he received from him the following compliment upon the work: "Dr. Farmer," said Johnson, "you have done that which never was done before; that is, you have completely finished a controversy beyond all further doubt." "I thank you," answered Dr. Farmer, "for your flattering opinion of my work, but still think there are some critics who will adhere to their old opinions; certain persons that I could name."

"Ah!" said Johnson, "that may be true: for the limbs will quiver and move when the soul is gone."

Whether Shakspeare knew much or nothing of the ancients, may have been decided by Dr. Farmer; but who can decide on which part would have been the greatest gain; That of Shakspeare in having known the ancients, or the ancients in having known Shakspeare.

Dr. Farmer has been long celebrated as a man particularly well informed on the subject of old English literature; and, as a man of learning, was, therefore, always an acceptable guest with Mr. Reynolds. He was a native of Leicester, and

nearly of the same age with his friend; and having completed his education at Cambridge, he entered into orders, serving a curacy at a village near that university for many years, whilst a tutor at Emanuel College: but his appointment, in 1767, as a preacher at Whitehall, gave him frequent opportunities of residence in London, where he became a distinguished book collector.

Dr. Askew, of Queen's-square, was particularly attached to him and, being himself a man of learning, gave him a most hospitable reception at his house; where he first met Mr. Reynolds along with several others of the distinguished characters of the day.

With these two he mixed much in evening society; so much so, indeed, that when offered a bishopric by Mr. Pitt, so strong was his wish to associate without restraint, "and to enjoy himself without responsibility," that, as he said to a friend, "one that enjoyed the theatre and the Queen's Head in the evening, would have made but an indifferent bishop." He was therefore a member of several clubs, particularly one in Essex-street, founded by Johnson; the unincreasable club at the Queen's Head in Holborn, where he met Hayley, Romney, Topham, Newbery, and others; and the Eumelian club, held at the Blenheim Tavern, in Bond-street, of which Mr. Reynolds himself was a member, together with Messrs. Boswell, Windham, Knight, North, Burney, Seward, and

many other highly respectable and much esteemed public characters.

It is not here irrelevant to notice, that it was owing to his good sense and good taste (whilst canon residentiary of St. Paul's) that his colleagues were induced to admit the ornaments of sculpture into that cathedral. Had such a man been concerned in the direction of that edifice, when it was proposed to decorate it with the efforts of the graphic art, how easily would a new and permanent source of encouragement have been established? one too, most certainly no less consonant with the principles of the Protestant religion than the productions of the sculptor.

In a letter written by Mr. Burke to Barry, then at Rome, in the year 1766, I find some observations of Mr. Reynolds's recorded, which deserve insertion here.

He says, "Reynolds was dining with me when the pictures arrived, (meaning those by Barry, painted at Rome, and sent to Mr. Burke,) and I will tell you fairly what he said.

"He declared the drawing to be perfectly correct, the expression just and noble: Alexander's attention, and the physician's unaffected manner, could not, he said, be better. In regard to the colouring, he said he did not wish it other than it was. That colouring was a knack acquired by habit and experiment; that nothing, however, could be more dangerous to a young painter than

to indulge himself in that glare of colour which catches the eye, and imposes on the imperfect judgement. I do not at all suppose that his opinion is, that colouring is an idle or useless part of your art; but, if I apprehend him right, I think his opinion is, that to begin with a wish of excelling in colour is to begin at the wrong end of the art."

"As our conversation naturally dwelt on painting, I found that Reynolds's expectation of what would be your great object of attention were the works of Michael Angelo, whom he considers as the Homer of Painting: I could find that his own study had been much engrossed by that master, whom he still admires the most. He mentioned, indeed, his having, for some months, confined himself to the Capella Sistina, and begged me to desire you to let us know the effect it has on you when you give it your attention," &c.

In a subsequent letter, he observes, "I thank you for Alexander; Reynolds sets a high esteem upon it; he thinks it admirably drawn, and with great spirit. He had it at his house for some time, and returned it in a very fine frame; and it, at present, makes a capital ornament of our little drawing-room, between the two doors." Again, speaking of domestic news, he says—

"Here they are (the painters) as you left them; Reynolds every now and then striking out some wonder."

In this year, Reynolds painted a very excellent three-quarter portrait of Mrs. Collyer, an eminent beauty of that time, and from which there is a mezzotinto print taken by J. Watson. The face is seen in profile, and has a pensive air, as if contemplating the death of a favorite sparrow, which appears laid on the table before her. The lines under the print are from Catullus:

Passer mortuus est meæ puellæ;
Passer delitiæ meæ puellæ;
Quem plus illa oculis suis amabat.

The following couplets were written by a gentleman of Devonshire, a friend of Mr. Reynolds's, (and who knew the lady,) on seeing the picture—

Sorrow too deep for him to trace,
Timanthes did conceal;
The anguish in the Father's face,
He covered with a veil.

The light'ning of bright Collyer's eyes
Reynolds despairs to show;
That vivid fire his art defies;
He bids a tear to flow.

In 1766, Reynolds had the honor to paint the portrait of the late unfortunate Queen of Denmark, sister to his present Majesty, immediately before her departure from this country for that kingdom. But the execution of this picture was attended with considerable embarrassment, in respect to making it a pleasant performance; for this unhappy princess, at the times of her sitting for the portrait, was generally in tears, as if impressed with a presentiment of her future misfortunes.

I do not know who is the possessor of this picture, or at whose request it was painted; but there is a mezzotinto print taken from it.

There is now in the royal palace of Trianon, near Paris, an historical picture by Reynolds, which he painted about the period under our present revision, the size rather less than that of a whole length canvas; it represents the subject of Abraham and Isaac. This must have been one of his earliest attempts at historical painting; but how it has got into its present situation in France I do not know, as it is a very rare thing for English paintings to appear beyond the limits of the realm. It is evident, however, from its preservation, that its possessors have been liberal enough to allow *some* merit to British art.

1767.

ÆTAT. 43.

In the regular exhibition of this year, Mr. Reynolds did not produce a single effort of his pencil; yet even here he afforded a proof that merit will always be exposed to the little attacks of malice; for Burke observes in a letter to Barry, dated the 26th of April, 1767, "Jones, who used to be poet-laureat to the exhibition, is prepared to be a severe and almost general satirist upon the exhibitors. His ill behaviour has driven him from all their houses, and he resolves to take revenge in this manner. He has endeavoured to find out

what pictures they will exhibit, and upon such information as he has got, has before-hand given a poetic description of those pictures which he has not seen. I am told he has gone so far as to abuse Reynolds, at guess, as an exhibitor of several pictures, though he does not put in one. This is a very moral poet."

The reason of his apparent inattention to the exhibition this year, is afterwards explained by Burke, saying, "The exhibition will be opened to-morrow. Reynolds, though he has, I think, some better portraits than he ever before painted, does not think mere heads sufficient, and having no piece of fancy finished, sends in nothing this time."*

In a subsequent letter from the same pen, in August, we find, "As to Reynolds, he is perfectly well, and still keeps that superiority over the rest, which he always had from his genius, sense, and morals."

* Amongst those specimens which Burke alluded to, Sir Joshua had painted one particularly fine, a three-quarter size of George Colman, sen., which picture is now in the possession of the Earl of Mulgrave; it was painted in the winter season, and the colours, from the dampness of the atmosphere, would not harden, for which reason, Sir Joshua placed the picture very close to the fire, in order to dry it more expeditiously. In the mean time, a sudden gust of wind rushed down the chimney, and unluckily, as was at first considered, sprinkled the picture all over with soot and dust, which it was impossible to brush entirely off, as the colours were still damp as when first laid upon the canvas. This accident has therefore given it a darker hue of colour, but without any diminution of harmony or effect.

I may mention in this place, that Mr. Parry was a pupil of Mr. Reynolds some time before the year 1767, being then also a student at the academy in St. Martin's-lane: his early initiation into the art having commenced at Shipley's drawing-school, and been continued in the gallery of the Duke of Richmond, so nobly and generously established for the furtherance of taste, and the development of genius.

It is recorded of him, however, that his early excellence, or rather the praises bestowed on it, together with the premiums awarded by the Society for the encouragement of Arts, for his drawings from antique models, and also from the life, had the unpleasant effect of relaxing his studies and exertions, instead of stimulating him to attempt approaching nearer to perfection.

After finishing his term with Mr. Reynolds he retired to Wales, where he was invited by the late munificent Sir Watkyn Williams Wynne, who was his steady patron, and assisted him in his proposed plan of studying at Rome, whither he went in the year 1770; returning five years afterwards to England, when he attempted to settle in his profession in the metropolis, taking a house in Duke-street, St. James's. Having married Miss Keene, daughter of the architect of that name, he was affected so much by some unhappy family occurrences, as to retire from the metropolis soon after, and to settle at his former Welsh residence,

where, however, he remained but a short time; the loss of his wife, who died in parturition of her only child, having induced him, once more, to visit Rome, and leave what may properly be called his natal country; for, though born in London, he was yet of Welsh parentage, his father being the celebrated blind performer on the Welsh harp.

His object in revisiting Rome seems to have been to seek employment in his art, in addition to the wish of stifling the regret for the loss of an amiable wife; he accordingly commenced the copying of some of the finest pieces in that capital, but his health was soon so much impaired, that he was induced to return to England, where he did indeed arrive, but only to breathe his last sigh where he had first opened his eyes upon the world.

In Edward's Anecdotes may be seen many particulars respecting his performances; and I cannot help regretting together with that author, that his drawing, in chalk, of the gallery so munificently filled with valuable subjects for the student, and so liberally opened by a late Duke of Richmond, is lost, as such a thing would now be highly interesting to all lovers of the art.

Mr. Reynolds now attained the summit of his reputation as an artist, and maintained his dignified station to the close of his life. Cotes and Ramsay shared, in some degree, with him the fa-

shion of the day; for each of those painters had employment from the court of England, where Reynolds as an artist was never able to become a favorite. From that source of envied and enviable honour, he had not the happiness of receiving a single commission; for it is to be observed, that those exquisite portraits of the King and Queen, now in the council-room of the Royal Academy, were painted at the request of Reynolds himself, purposely for that place.

Mr. Cotes has now been dead upwards of forty years, having lived only two years after the establishment of the Royal Academy, of which he was a member, and indeed one of the four who signed the petition to his Majesty to solicit its foundation.

This was the artist whom Hogarth considered superior to Reynolds as a portrait painter; but perhaps his great excellence ought to be confined solely to his portraits in crayons, in which style he was certainly superior to most of his rivals, as has been properly remarked by Mr. Edwards. In oils, however, he must be considered totally inferior to his illustrious competitor; and he was evidently so in the opinion of the public, as his price for a three-quarter never exceeded twenty guineas.

Mr. Allan Ramsay, even if possessed of no merit of his own, would always have been noticed as

the son of Allan, the Scottish poet, and the Burns of the early part of the last century.

His father is called a self-taught poet. It is difficult, however, to know what that means when said by way of distinction—every real poet must be self-taught: and the son, in the same manner, is said to be a self-taught painter, because he had received no instructions till he gave them to himself in Italy; as every good painter has done before him, either there or elsewhere. But his being the compatriot of the Earl of Bute was a ready passport to royal notice on his return, particularly when added to his own abilities. He was certainly superior to the artists of his time in general; though his excellence did not warrant Walpole in classing him so exactly with Mr. Reynolds when he said, "Reynolds and Ramsay have wanted subjects, not genius." But I have heard Reynolds himself say, that Ramsay was the most sensible man of all the living artists; and therefore it proved that something besides good sense is required to make a great painter.

In 1767 the royal patronage seemed favourable towards the artists, and an attempt was made to form an academy, partly arising from the dissensions and animosities which followed the incorporation in 1765; for those who were not admitted into the body as incorporated, were so stimulated by jealousy as to resolve to submit no longer to rules and regulations, towards which they

had no voice, and they accordingly attempted, for a year or two, to get up an exhibition of their own, but were not very successful in this plan.

Without entering into a tedious detail of minute circumstances and of the petty animosities at that time existing among the artists, I shall briefly observe, that during all the contentions between the Society of Artists, Dalton's Royal Academy in Pall Mall, and the intrigues and quarrels that occupied so much of the public press and of the public time, Mr. Reynolds did not interfere; his name, indeed, was on the roll of the Society at its first incorporation, and he was afterwards appointed one of the directors, but he did not act, and, as quaintly observed by a writer of that time, "did not like them much;"—in fact, he had long withdrawn himself from the private meetings of the directors, declaring publicly, that he was no friend to their proceedings.

Much credit is, however, due to him, for his exertions in favor of the public exhibitions; and Barry, indeed, does him full justice in one of his lectures, when speaking of them as *established* by Reynolds, he says, "to which we owe almost all the art we can boast."

As a painter, also, Reynolds's merit and originality were now almost universally acknowledged; and, as a further confirmation of Barry's opinion even at this time, that artist, in a letter from Rome

to Dr. Sleigh in Ireland, dated November, 1767, says—

"As to Roman artists, notwithstanding what may be said to the contrary, I have no scruple at pronouncing them not worth criticising; and I shall, with a heart-felt satisfaction, say, that Reynolds, and our people at home, possess, with a very few exceptions, all that exists of sound art in Europe."

1768.

ÆTAT. 44.

In this year (1768), in order at once to conciliate jarring interests, a rational and extended plan was drawn up for the present Royal Academy, of which, it has since been well observed by Barry, "under the reign of his present Majesty, our most gracious patron, the arts were, in some measure, raised out of that disgraceful obscurity in which they had been so long buried; and a Royal Academy was instituted under the King's immediate protection, for the purpose of bringing forward that great line of historical, superior art; from the successful prosecution of which only, the King and public can expect to see its reputation worthy their attention." The most important event to be recorded in the memoirs of this year, is the foundation of the present Royal Academy, the following account

of which is thus related by one of the principal persons concerned in its formation.

The four persons who first planned the institution, were Sir William Chambers, Mr. West, Mr. Cotes, and Mr. Moser; these together carried on the project with such profound secresy, that not one of the incorporated society had the least knowledge or idea of its having been seriously thought of; insomuch, that even Mr. Kirby their president, had just at that time assured them, from his chair of office, that his Majesty intended to patronise them, and also to visit their exhibition. In the mean time, the four above named persons, with the concurrence of some others of their party, proceeded in their plan. They also made out a list of their officers, as well as of those who were to compose the body, containing about thirty names, and had inserted that of Reynolds amongst the rest. This list was to be delivered to the King for his approbation and signature: however, Mr. Reynolds was still unwilling to join with either party, which resolution he made known to Sir William Chambers; in consequence of which Mr. Penny was sent to persuade him to join their party, but that proved in vain. Penny then applied to Mr. West, and begged him to intercede with Reynolds, adding, that he was the only person that could influence him to consent. Mr. West accordingly called on Mr. Reynolds on the same evening, on which the whole party had a

meeting, about thirty in number, at Mr. Wilton's house, expecting the result of Mr. West's negotiation, as the king had appointed the following morning to receive their plan, with the nomination of their officers. Mr. West remained upwards of two hours endeavouring to persuade Reynolds, and at last prevailed so far, that he ordered his coach and went with Mr. West to meet the party; and immediately, on his entering the room, they, with one voice, hailed him as their president. He seemed to be very much affected by the compliment, and returned them his thanks for the high mark of their approbation, but declined the honor till such time as he had consulted with his friends Dr. Johnson and Mr. Edmund Burke. This demur greatly disappointed the company, as they were expected to be with the King on the very next morning, by appointment; but Messrs. West and Cotes avoided going to the King next day, as they could not present him with a complete list of their officers, for the want of a president; and it was not till a fortnight after that Reynolds gave his consent, although Mr. West had called on him in the mean time to know his determination, when Reynolds frankly told him, that he had been informed, from the very best authority, that their scheme would come to nothing, as it was wholly a delusion: and when Mr. West testified his astonishment at such an idea, Mr. Reynolds freely confessed to him, that he had the intelligence from

Mr. Kirby himself, who assured him that the King had declared his intention of giving his countenance and protection to the incorporated Society of Artists, and also to visit their annual exhibition, to which Mr. Kirby added, that, in consequence, he had himself declared the same to the society from the president's chair.

It was just about this time that Mr. West had finished his picture of the subject of Regulus, which was painted by the command of the King, and, on the morning appointed by his Majesty, he went with it to the palace in order to shew it to him, when the King was graciously pleased to approve of it highly: and at the time, whilst his Majesty was looking at the picture with Mr. West in the room, they were informed by a page, that Mr. Kirby was without waiting for his Majesty's commands. He was immediately sent for, and, on his entrance, the King directed his (Mr. Kirby's) attention to the picture, asking his opinion of it; Mr. Kirby commended the picture much, and particularly that part which fell under his own province, to wit, the perspective, as in that science Kirby had been the King's instructor. Kirby asked who was the painter of so good a picture, when the King pointed to Mr. West as the artist who had done it. Mr. Kirby then observed, that such a work ought most certainly to be seen by the public at large, and hoped his Majesty would permit it to be in the exhibition of the

incorporated society of Artists. The King answered, that it was his pleasure that it should be exhibited, but it most certainly should be at his own Royal Academy Exhibition. At these words poor Kirby appeared to be like one thunder-struck, and just ready to drop on the floor; it was the first confirmation he had received of the report, which before he had considered as unfounded, and did not believe. It has been said, and supposed by many, that this circumstance so much affected his mind, that he actually died soon after, of the extreme mortification it gave him.

In the course of the year 1768, Goldsmith's comedy, called the Good-Natured Man, came out at Covent Garden theatre. In this play, the bailiff scene was thought to be vulgar by the company in the galleries, who violently testified their disapprobation at dialogue so low; and when the speech in that scene was uttered, containing the words "That's all my eye," their delicacy was so much hurt, that it was apprehended the comedy (which in other respects was approved of) would have been driven from the stage for ever. However, by expunging the objectionable parts, that composition became a stock play, as it is called, to the theatre, and put five hundred pounds into Goldsmith's pocket.

It was in this year that the King of Denmark came to England, when every species of ingenuity was set to work in hopes of affording him amuse-

ment: the society of artists among the rest exerted their powers, and produced a splendid exhibition of their works at the great room in Spring Gardens, not only in order to gratify his Danish Majesty, but also to certify to him the degree to which the arts had risen in this country. Mr. Reynolds graced it with four of his best pictures, to wit:

A singularly fine portrait, half length, of the famous Laurence Sterne, of which there is a very good mezzotinto print;

A picture, representing James Paine, architect, and James Paine, jun.: from this picture there is also a good print taken;

A portrait of a young Lady with a Dog;

A portrait of a Lady, full length.

The exhibition was opened to the public on September 30, 1768.

Notwithstanding the part which Mr. Reynolds was taking in the necessary preparations for the establishment of a Royal Academy, yet he found time to gratify himself with a trip to Paris, in the autumn of this year, in company with Mr. William Burke, who, in a letter dated the 10th of October, from that metropolis, says, "Mr. Reynolds and I make this scamper together, and are both extremely satisfied with our tour; we return in a few days."

His return took place within the expected time; and so forward were the proposed arrangements,

that on the 28th of November a petition was presented to his Majesty, of which the professed objects were the establishment of a well regulated school or academy of design, for the use of students in the arts, and an annual exhibition open to all artists of distinguished merit, where they should have an opportunity of presenting their productions to the inspection of the public, and of thereby obtaining such share of general reputation and encouragement, as their performances might seem to merit.

It was intended to supply the funds for the support of the institution, by the produce of this annual exhibition; and his Majesty was graciously pleased to promise what further aid it might require, from the privy purse. This aid was necessary, for a few years, to the amount of 5000*l.*; but the sums raised by the exhibitions were soon so considerable, as not only to render the royal munificence unnecessary, but even to accumulate a large surplus in the funds, now forming the basis of a liberal fund for decayed artists. For the first twenty years, the net produce, on an average, amounted to upwards of 1500*l.* per annum, and since that it has amounted to an additional 1000*l.*

A very good view of the regulations of this establishment may be found in the Monthly Magazine for March, 1810; and I may here observe, that annual prizes were also determined on as sti-

mulants to rising genius. These were, of course, to be awarded to the best productions; but it was whimsically quoted at the time, from the laws of the ancient city of Thebes, that formerly the painter who exhibited the worst picture, was also subject to fine!

Professorships were likewise established, and Dr. Johnson was nominated Professor of Ancient Literature; an office, indeed, merely honorary, but conferred on him, as Sir John Hawkins hints, at the recommendation of Mr. Reynolds.

Goldsmith also was not forgotten, he having received the complimentary appointment of Professor of Ancient History; an office, like the preceding, without trouble or salary; and, as Dr. Percy observed, merely giving him a place at the annual dinner.

Goldsmith himself, in a letter to his brother, says of it—"The King has lately been pleased to make me Professor of Ancient History in a Royal Academy of Painting, which he has just established; but there is no salary annexed; and I took it rather as a compliment to the Institution, than any benefit to myself. Honours to one in my situation are something like ruffles to a man that wants a shirt."

But the most important event as relative to this Institution, and as connected with the subject of the present biography, was, that in order to give dignity to this Royal Academy of Painting, Sculp-

ture, and Architecture, which was composed of the ablest and most respectable artists then resident in Great Britain, Reynolds was elected the first President by an unanimous vote. On that occasion he was knighted, perhaps with a view to dignify him; and indeed, had that distinction been always so bestowed, it would really have been an honour, and not the subject of those sarcasms which but too often accompany the title. Reynolds received it with satisfaction, as he well knew that it would give additional splendour to his works in vulgar eyes. It is not matter of surprize that his election as president was unanimous: it is certain that, every circumstance considered, he was the most fit, if not the only person, qualified to take the chair: his professional rank, his large fortune, the circle of society in which he moved, all these contributed to establish his claim; and to these was added a still more urgent motive, namely, that he had refused (as I have been told) to belong to the Society on any other conditions. Accordingly the Royal Academy of Arts in London was opened on the 10th of December, 1768, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knt., with a discourse adapted to the occasion.

With respect to the title of knighthood,* which

* Sir Godfrey Kneller affected, in his drollery, to treat his titles of knight and baronet which he possessed, as beneath him; saying, that being a man of genius, he was one of God Almighty's nobles.

accompanied the election to the president's chair, I have only to add, that Edmund Burke was much gratified by the honour conferred on Sir Joshua; and he, at the time, remarked that the sound of the name was so well adapted for a title, that it seemed as if it had been chosen for the purpose.

This honour of knighthood was highly gratifying to all Sir Joshua's friends. Dr. Johnson acknowledged that for years he had not tasted wine, until he was induced to break through his rule of abstemiousness in order to celebrate his friend's elevation.

As a further testimony of Sir Joshua's merit, and well deserved honour, Barry says, in a letter, in the early part of this year, to Mr. Burke, "I am happy to find Mr. Reynolds is at the head of this academy;" (this was previous to his hearing of his knighthood;) "from his known public spirit, and warm desire of raising up art among us, (which exerted itself so successfully in establishing the Exhibition,) he will, I have no doubt contrive this institution to be productive of all the advantages that could possibly be derived from it; and whilst it is in such hands as his, we shall have nothing to fear from those shallows and quicksands upon which the Italian and French academies have lost themselves."

The task of delivering discourses in the Academy was no part of the prescribed duty of this

office first so ably filled by Sir Joshua; but was voluntarily imposed on himself, for reasons which shall be afterwards noticed, whilst taking a slight view of his fifteenth discourse, in which he gives his reasons himself.

If it were a matter of any importance, we might regret that there is some difficulty in fixing the exact date of his first discourse: some accounts stating its delivery on the 10th of December, 1768, when the Academy was first opened: in Malone's edition of his works, it is indeed dated on the 2nd of January, 1769; whilst Sir Joshua himself, in a letter to Barry, which will be hereafter inserted, speaks of its being delivered on the first of that month.

Without attempting to reconcile those jarring dates, I shall merely observe, that the objects he had in view in this first discourse, were to imprint upon the minds of his audience how many advantages might be expected from such an institution; after which he offered hints for the consideration both of the professors and of the visitors, whose office it is to attend the school of the living model. He next showed the absolute necessity of an implicit obedience to all the rules of art, on the part of the youthful students, warning them to repress any premature or irregular disposition to aim at masterly dexterity before they had well acquired the necessary rudiments; and he then showed, to

render even diligence effectual, it was absolutely necessary that it should always be directed to proper objects.

In alluding to the extraordinary circumstance of such an institution not having been before established, he observed, that "It is, indeed, difficult to give any other reason why an empire like that of Britain should so long have wanted an ornament so suitable to its greatness, than that slow progression of things which naturally makes elegance and refinement the last effect of opulence and power."*

After shewing that the academy had commenced its labours at, perhaps, the happiest possible period, not only from the patronage of the Monarch, and from the general desire among the nobility to be distinguished as lovers and judges of the arts, as well as from the greater superfluity of public wealth in general to reward the professors, but also from the fact, that there was, at that time, a greater number of excellent artists than were ever known before, at one period, in the nation; he pointed out the principal advantages resulting from the

* That such a measure as the establishment of an academy did not take place before, was accounted for, in some degree, by Sir Joshua himself; but another reason may also be assigned, to wit, the total neglect of the arts, both by the nation and its governors, and the consequent poverty of the body of artists, which rendered it impossible until his Majesty lent his assistance.

academy to the art itself, to consist not only in its furnishing able men to direct the student, but in being, also, a repository for the great examples of the art. "These," said he, "are the materials on which genius is to work, and without which the strongest intellect may be fruitlessly or deviously employed."

Whilst recommending strict attention to the students, he particularly inculcated, that "those models which have passed through the approbation of ages, should be considered by them as perfect and infallible guides; as subjects for their imitation, not their criticism;" and he then expressed his confidence, that this was the only efficacious way of making any progress in the arts; adding, that he who sets out with doubting, will find life finished before he becomes master even of the rudiments of his profession. He here considered it as a maxim, that he who begins by presuming on his own sense, has ended his studies as soon as he has commenced them; and from this he took occasion to observe, that every opportunity should be seized to discountenance that false and vulgar opinion, that rules are the fetters of genius. In contradiction to such an opinion, he asserted, that they were fetters only to men of no genius; as that armour which, upon the strong, is an ornament and defence, becomes a load upon the weak and mis-shapen, crippling that body which it was intended to protect.

The advantage of assiduity he proved from experience:—"When we read the lives of the most eminent painters, every page informs us, that no part of their time was spent in dissipation. Even an increase of fame served only to augment their industry. To be convinced with what persevering assiduity they pursued their studies, we need only reflect on their method of proceeding in their most celebrated works. When they conceived a subject, they first made a variety of sketches, then a finished drawing of the whole; after that a more correct drawing of every separate part—heads, hands, feet, and pieces of drapery; they then painted the picture; and, after all, retouched it from the life. The pictures, thus wrought with such pains, now appear like the effect of enchantment, and as if some mighty genius had struck them off at a blow!"

At the conclusion of this spirited discourse, he expressed his hope that the Institution might answer the expectation of its Royal Founder—"that the present age may vie in arts with that of Leo the Tenth; and that *the dignity* of the dying art (to make use of an expression of Pliny) may be revived under the reign of George the Third."

This animated oration gave general satisfaction, and in a periodical journal of that time, it was observed, that the discourse certainly did honour to the President as a painter, if any honour could be added to that which he had already acquired by his

pencil. It was also acknowledged that it had great merit as a literary composition; whilst Sir Joshua's idea, "that the Academy would at least contribute to advance the knowledge of the arts, and bring us nearer to that ideal excellence which it is the lot of genius always to contemplate, but never to attain," is followed by the observation, that this sentiment, none but a genius conscious of the idea of unattainable perfection, and of a perpetual effort to approach it, could have conceived.

Before we proceed to investigate the purport of his discourses in their regular order, it may be well here to observe, that the delivery of these discourses was not particularly happy, considering the great taste of the speaker in other respects, and cannot be much commended; which may be accounted for from two causes: first, that his deafness might have prevented his being well able to modulate his voice; but secondly, I am rather of opinion, that the real cause was, that, as no man ever felt a greater horror at affectation than he did, therefore he feared to assume too much the air of an orator, lest it should have the appearance of conceit. Hence he naturally fell into the opposite extreme, as the safest retreat from what he thought the greatest evil.

But most certainly his voice was not so distinct and audible as might be desired, when the matter was so excellent; and the following circumstance is in some degree a proof.

On one of the evenings, when Sir Joshua delivered his discourse to the Royal Academy, the audience, as usual on those occasions, was numerous; composed not only of artists, but also of the learned and the great. The Earl of C——, who was one of the company present, came up to him, immediately after he had finished his lecture, saying, "Sir Joshua, you read your discourse in so low a tone that I did not distinguish one word you said." To which the president, with a smile replied, "That was to my advantage."

1769.

ÆTAT. 45.

On the 1st of January, 1769, a poetical tribute was paid to the arts, and to the new Academy of London, by the pen of the Reverend Dr. Thomas Francklin, Chaplain to the King, and translator of Phalaris, Sophocles, and Lucian, into English, and author also of three plays, the Earl of Warwick, and Matilda, tragedies, and The Contract, a comedy.

Thus we see the native, humble, British arts, began to assume some small degree of consequence, this being the first public compliment, I believe, that was ever paid to them; and therefore ought to be most carefully preserved as a great curiosity, as well as a good specimen of an ode: amongst modern odes, at least, not the most odious.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE ARTS.

When Discord, late, her baleful influence shed
O'er the fair realms of Science and of Art,
Neglected Genius bent his drooping head,
And pierc'd with anguish ev'ry tuneful heart:
Apollo wept his broken lyre—
Wept to behold the mournful choir
Of his lov'd Muses, now an exil'd train,
And in their seats to see Alecto reign.

When lo! Britannia, to the throne
Of goodness makes her sorrows known;
For never there did grief complain,
Or injur'd merit plead in vain.
The monarch heard her just request,
He saw, he felt, and he redress'd:
Quick, with a master hand, he tunes the strings,
And harmony from discord springs.

Thus good, by Heav'n's command, from evil flows,
From Chaos, thus, of old, Creation rose;
When order with confusion join'd,
And jarring elements combin'd
To grace, with mutual strength, the great design,
And speak the Architect divine.

Whilst Eastern tyrants, in the trophy'd car,
Wave the red banner of destructive war,
In George's breast a nobler flame
Is kindled, and a fairer fame
Excites to cherish native worth—
To call the latent seeds of genius forth—
To bid discordant factions cease,
And cultivate the gentle arts of peace.
And lo! from this auspicious day
The sun of science beams a purer ray.

Behold! a brighter train of years—
A new Augustan age appears!
The time, nor distant far, shall come,
When England's tasteful youth no more
Shall wander to Italia's classic shore;
No more to foreign climes shall roam
In search of models—better found at home.

With rapture, the prophetic muse
Her country's op'ning glories views;
Already sees, with wond'ring eyes,
Our Titians and our Guidos rise;—
Sees new Palladios grace th' historic page,
And *British Raffaelles* charm a future age.

Meantime, ye sons of art, your off'rings bring,
To grace your Patron and your King;
Bid Sculpture grace his honour'd name
In marble—lasting as his fame:
Bid Painting's magic pencil trace
The features of his darling race;
And, as it flows through all the Royal line,
Glow with superior warmth and energy divine.

If tow'ring Architecture still
Can boast her old creative skill,
Bid some majestic structure rise to view—
Worthy him, and worthy *you;*
Where *art* may join with *nature* and with sense—
Splendor with grace—with taste, magnificence;
Where strength may be with elegance combin'd,
The perfect image of its master's mind.

And oh! if with the tuneful throng
The Muse may dare to mix her humble song,
In your glad train permit her to appear,
Though poor, yet willing, and though rude, sincere,
To praise the Sov'reign whom her heart approves,
And pay this tribute to the ART she loves."

On the 2d of the month, the academy was opened, and a general meeting of the Royal Academicians took place, when some public business was gone through; after which, the whole body adjourned to an elegant entertainment at the St. Alban's Tavern, where Sir Joshua presided with his accustomed urbanity, the meeting being honoured with the presence of many of the most distinguished nobility, who were now proud to come forward as patrons of the arts.

It seems beneath the dignity even of biography, to note these things, which many will esteem trifling in themselves; yet the time may come, when even these particulars will be of some interest: and as this period was an era in the annals of British art, I must be allowed to mark it by the gratulations of the poets of the day, who expressed their good wishes in the best manner they were able, and who no doubt would have done it much better if it had been in their power. In that point of view, therefore, I shall not refrain from inserting a song made for the occasion, by the good old Mr. Hull, the comedian, and sung at this joyous meeting by Mr. Vernon, the fashionable performer of the day.

SONG.

Let Science hail this happy year—
Let Fame its rising glories sing;
When arts unwonted lustre wear,
And boast a patron in their King:
And here, unrivall'd shall they reign,
For George protects the polish'd train.

To you, just ripen'd into birth,
He gives the fair—the great design;
'Tis *yours*, ye Sires, of genuine worth,
To bid the future artists shine;
That Arts, unrivall'd, long may reign,
Where George protects the polish'd train.

'Tis *yours*, O well selected band!
To watch where infant genius blows,
To rear the flow'r, with fost'ring hand,
And ev'ry latent sweet disclose;
So Arts, unrivall'd, long will reign
Where George protects the polish'd train.

No more to distant realms repair
For foreign aid, or borrow'd rule;
Beneath her Monarch's gen'rous care,
Britannia founds a nobler school—
Where Arts, unrivall'd, shall remain,
For George protects the polish'd train.

So shall her sons, in science bred,
Diffuse her arts from shore to shore,
And wide her growing genius spread,
As round the world her thunders roar:
For he who rules the subject main,
Great George—protects the polish'd train."

This song, so congenial to the flattering hopes of the company, whose cares were, for a time, suspended in festivity, and who had met to be gay, was received with much applause.

On Wednesday, the 26th of April, the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, in Pall Mall, was opened for the first time, and drew the greatest crowds, and of the highest fashion; and it was

observed, in the periodical journals of the time, that the encouragement given to this institution was even already visible in the works of genius then exhibited: and I may take the opportunity of noting in this place, that Sir Joshua's exertions to raise the character of the Academy, were not confined to his discourses alone; as, from its first opening, until the year 1790, inclusive, it appears that he sent no less than two hundred and forty-four pictures to the various exhibitions.

In this place, as a proof of the advance that the arts had made in England, even as early as 1769, I shall mention that the pictures which chiefly attracted the attention of the connoisseurs at this first season of the Royal Academy Exhibition in Pall Mall, were the departure of Regulus from Rome, and Venus lamenting the Death of Adonis, both by Mr. West; Hector and Andromache, Venus directing Æneas and Achates, by Mrs. Angelica Kauffman, a lady who was but lately arrived in London; the King and Queen, by Mr. Nathaniel Dance; Lady Molyneux, by Mr. Gainsborough; a piping Boy, a candle-light piece, by Mr. Hone; an altar-piece of the Annunciation, by Mr. Cipriani; the character of Hebe, the Duke of Gloucester, and a Boy playing at Cricket, by Mr. Cotes; a capital landscape, containing a view of Penton Lynn, in Scotland, by Mr. Barrett; and the Smith, described by Shakespeare in King

John, with open mouth, swallowing a Tailor's news, by Mr. Penny: to these we must add, Sir Joshua Reynolds' portraits of the Duchess of Manchester and her Son, as Diana disarming Cupid; the portrait of Lady Blake, as Juno receiving the cestus from Venus; and the portrait of Miss Morris, as Hope nursing Love.

This Miss Morris, I must observe, was a beautiful young lady, who, from the unexpected misfortunes of her family, was reduced to the necessity of seeking some employment for a livelihood; and being supposed to have requisite talents for the stage, she was advised by her friends to attempt it as a profession. Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, and many other illustrious persons, who were her particular friends and patrons, attended on the first night of her appearance on any stage, when she was to perform the character of Juliet, at Covent-Garden theatre; but from the exceeding delicacy, of both her mind and body, she was overpowered by her timidity, to such a degree, that she fainted away on her first entrance on the stage, and with much difficulty was prevailed on to go through the part. This very pitiable young lady shortly after fell into a deep decline, which ended in her death. Her mother was, I think, a native of the West Indies, and, on the death of her husband, who had been governor of one of the islands, came over to England, with a son and two daughters,

and also a negro slave, who afterwards became the servant of Sir Joshua.*

In honor of the King's birth-day, which was kept on Monday the 5th of June, and the first which had occurred after the institution of the Royal Academy, the body of Royal Academicians gave an entertainment at their house in Pall Mall; and, as a token of their grateful sense of his Majesty's favour to them, a splendid illumination in the evening was displayed, with transparent paintings, and lamps of various colours, occupying the whole front of the Royal Academy. In the centre compartment appeared a graceful female figure seated, representing Painting, surrounded with Genii, some of which guided her pencil, whilst others dictated subjects to her: at her feet were various youths employed in the study of the art; and over her head hovered a celestial form, representing Royal Munificence, attended by several other figures supporting a cornucopia filled with honors and rewards. This whole piece was executed by Mr. Cipriani, R. A.

On the left side of Painting, in another compartment, Sculpture was represented by a female figure, standing upon a rock of marble, holding

* She was the daughter of Valentine Morris, esq., the original possessor and improver of the romantic and much admired domain of Piercefield, in Monmouthshire; in the adornment of which he had expended much money, and deranged his private fortune. Miss Morris made her first appearance at Covent Garden theatre on November 29, 1768; and died May 1, 1769.

in one hand an antique bust, and in the other the chisel and mallet. This compartment was executed by Mr. West, R. A.

On the right side of Painting, in a third compartment, was represented, by another female figure, Architecture, in a contemplative attitude, holding in her hand a pair of compasses, being surrounded with buildings, and having at her feet the basket and acanthus root, which are said to have given rise to the Corinthian order. This subject was executed by Mr. Nathaniel Dance, R. A.

Immediately above the centre compartment was a tablet with this inscription, "Royal Academy of Arts, instituted MDCCLXVIII." And upon the tablet was placed a medallion, in which were represented the portraits of their Majesties, by Mr. Penny, R. A. The medallion was surrounded with festoons of laurel, roses, and myrtle intertwined, and with trophies of arms, and attributes of Venus and the Graces, painted by Mr. Richards, R. A.

Some parts of the front were adorned with trophies alluding to the different arts of design, painted by Mr. Richards and Mr. Wale, R. A. And others were enriched with stars and various figures in lamps of different colours; the top of the building was terminated with a large Imperial Crown and various pyramids, &c. in lamps of different colours.

It should be noticed, that exhibitions of transparencies were at the time quite a novelty, so much so indeed, that nothing of the kind had hitherto been seen; in addition to which, this was the joint work of the first painters in the kingdom, and therefore was viewed by the populace with astonishment and delight: since then, however, from the vast increase of artists in the nation, transparencies are become so common, that they are little thought of, and commonly very indifferently executed.

In this year Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote a most excellent letter to Barry, then a student at Rome. It is so descriptive of the writer's principles, and so honourable to his feelings as an artist, that I shall insert it here at length, only premising, that it was partly addressed to Barry in consequence of a letter from him to Mr. Burke, in which he described himself as engaged in some contests with the picture dealers at Rome, who were acting very illiberally towards young English artists, and using underhand means to prevent their being employed by various travellers in copying or making originals, as those dealers in rotten pictures earnestly desired to possess themselves of all the loose cash which affluent tourists had purposed to lay out in Vertu.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am very much obliged to you for your remembrance of me in your letter to Mr. Burke, which, though I have read with great pleasure as a composition, I cannot help saying with some regret, to find that so great a portion of your attention has been engaged upon temporary matters, which might be so much more profitably employed upon what would stick by you through your whole life.

"Whoever is resolved to excel in painting, or indeed in any other art, must bring all his mind to bear upon that one object, from the moment he rises till he goes to bed; the effect of every object that meets the painter's eye may give him a lesson, provided his mind is calm, unembarrassed with other objects, and open to instruction. This general attention, with other studies connected with the art, which must employ the artist in his closet, will be found sufficient to fill up life, if it was much longer than it is. Were I in your place, I would consider myself as playing a great game, and never suffer the little malice and envy of my rivals to draw off my attention from the main object; which, if you pursue with a steady eye, it will not be in the power of all the Cicerones in the world to hurt you. Whilst they are endeavouring to prevent the gentlemen from employing the young artists, instead of injuring them, they are, in my opinion, doing them the greatest service.

"Whilst I was at Rome I was very little employed by them, and that I always considered as so much time lost: copying those ornamental pictures, which the travelling gentlemen always bring home with them as furniture for their houses, is far from being the most profitable manner of a student spending his time. Whoever has great views, I would recommend to him, whilst at Rome, rather to live on bread and water, than lose those advantages which he can never hope to enjoy a second time, and which he will find only in the Vatican; where, I will engage, no cavalier sends his students to copy for him. I do not mean this as any reproach to the gentlemen; the works in that place, though they are the proper study of an artist, make but an awkward figure painted in oil, and reduced to the size of easel pictures. The Capella Sistina is the production of the greatest genius that was ever employed in the arts; it is worth considering by what principles that stupendous greatness of style is produced; and endeavouring to produce something of your own on those principles, will be a more advantageous method of study, than copying the St. Cecilia in the Borghese, or the Herodias of Guido, which may be copied to eternity, without contributing one jot towards making a man a more able painter.

"If you neglect visiting the Vatican often, and particularly the Capella Sistina, you will neglect receiving that peculiar advantage which Rome can

give above all other cities in the world. In other places you will find casts from the antique, and capital pictures of the great painters, but it is *there* only that you can form an idea of the dignity of the art, as it is there only that you can see the works of Michael Angelo and Raffaelle. If you should not relish them at first, which may probably be the case, as they have none of those qualities which are captivating at first sight, never cease looking till you feel something like inspiration come over you, till you think every other painter insipid, in comparison, and to be admired only for petty excellencies.

"I suppose you have heard of the establishment of a Royal Academy here; the first opportunity I have I will send you the discourse I delivered at its opening, which was the first of January. As I hope you will be hereafter one of our body, I wish you would, as opportunity offers, make memorandums of the regulations of the academies that you may visit in your travels, to be engrafted on our own, if they should be found useful. "I am, with the greatest esteem,

"Yours,

"J. REYNOLDS.

"On reading my letter over, I think it requires some apology for the blunt appearance of a dictatorial style, in which I have obtruded my advice. I am forced to write in a great hurry, and have little time for polishing my style."

Barry writes thus to the Burkes, dated from Rome, July the 8th 1769.

"I wrote an answer some time ago, to a most obliging friendly letter which I received from Sir Joshua Reynolds. I am really happy at this other mark of distinction which is bestowed upon his unquestionably superior talents. Nobody rejoices more than I do, to find the world inclined to make those acknowledgments to abilities and virtue."

Barry, also, in his letter to Sir Joshua abovementioned, dated from Rome, May 17th, 1769, thus expresses himself.

From Mr. Barry to Mr. Reynolds.

Rome, May 17th, 1769.

"DEAR SIR,

"Nothing could have made me more really happy than the very kind letter you favoured me with lately. It came most opportunely to support my spirits at a time when I was in the hands of a doctor and a surgeon, and ill of a fever, which, I believe, was occasioned by a cold I got while working in the Vatican; but, thank God, I am tolerably well got over it, and though it kept me from work some weeks, yet, as I am got back again to the Vatican, and (what with bleeding and other evacuations in my illness) with a better frame of body, there is no reason to be

dissatisfied. Whenever the Pope is made, which I hope will be soon, I shall go to the Capella Sistina.

"There is a passage in your letter, which will be a sufficient excuse for what I am going to tell you, that I think myself rather reprehensible as a furious enthusiast for Michael Angelo, than as regarding him with any degree of coldness or indifference. I saw in *his* works only that deep knowledge of the human body, and that masterly style of drawing each part in particular, so noble in its form, and so adjusted to, and corresponding with the other parts, that for a naked figure, taken simply as such, there is nothing in painting to parallel him. It is only in the antique, where one sees the same knowledge and amazing fitness, in the detail of all the component parts of a figure; and if this is not the summum bonum of art, it is at least very near it; so that if, in any of my letters to my friends, I have been a little warm in expressing my feelings of the superiority of the antique to all things whatsoever, in fitness of parts, elegance and propriety of thinking, and, indeed, every thing that could be shewn in a statue; or if I have said that Raffaelle excelled in possessing the general parts of the art, and was nearest the antique in these things, and that Titian alone was the painter of painters, yet I never forgot that there were no examples of the naked to be found, except in Michael Angelo, that prodigy, in whose works may be seen the difference at least of two centuries be-

twixt them, and what was done by people immediately before him: one sees Raffaelle and all his contemporaries, as studiously concealing the naked, (no one chusing to contend it with Michael Angelo in that part) as the other was of shewing it. I know but of two or three examples of naked figures in Raffaelle, in the Galatea, Diogenes, and Christ in the dispute of the Sacrament, and the School of Athens, and his St. John. The two former are, you know, not to be mentioned with Michael Angelo: the St. John I will not speak of, as the original is, they say, in France: a comparison betwixt Raffaelle's Jonas, and Michael Angelo's Christ, would turn much in favor of Michael Angelo, though perhaps Raffaelle may have the advantage in the elegance of his idea and general form. You will excuse my mentioning these things to you, who are so much better acquainted with them already; but I wished to exculpate myself to you, and I will further add, that it was next to impossible that I should think lightly of Michael Angelo, as it is some years since I read a paper in the Idler, which has been pointed out to me as your's. I have a notion some how or other, that the arts would be just now of some consequence, and pretty much a public concern, did not the state competitors, of whom the papers are so full, divert the attention of the public into another channel. However, I can say with truth, that as nobody is more an enthusiast for art than

I am, so there is no one who rejoices more sincerely at the honor done art, by the title and dignity his majesty has graciously conferred on that person, whose plan of a public exhibition has been as serviceable to art as his performances were. The public opinion will supply what I would say.

"I am sincerely and heartily obliged to you, for your kind advice with respect to study; it has given me great consolation to find, that my whole course of study, for near three years I have been in Italy, has been so agreeable to the plan you mention. I had the mortification here to see that I was taking quite a different route from most other people in study, as I never so much as employed myself for two hours, upon any thing besides Michael Angelo, Raffaelle, and Titian, except my studies upon the antique and nature, my own little things of invention, and a piece of a figure of a Magdalen, by Annibal Carrachi. As I was conscious that my notions of colouring were bad and ill grounded, copying of Titian for some time, was, I thought, the only advisable course I could take, and I have reason to think I did not judge ill: the way of colouring I had then, was enough to damn even a good design and drawing, more especially amongst such people as ours, who are floating about after Magilphs and mysteries, and very little likely to satisfy themselves with that saying of Annibal's 'Buon disegno e colorito di fango.'

"It is impossible for me to describe to you, what an advantage I had in the acquaintance of Mr. Burke; it was a preparative for, and facilitated my relish for the beautiful things of the arts here; and I will affirm from experience, that one gentleman of a literary turn, and delicate feeling for the ideal, poetical and expressive parts of the art, is likely to be of the greatest service to a young artist, and will be found the true corrective for those mechanical and practical perfections, which the general herd of painters make such a stir about in their conversations, of which this country furnishes the strongest instance in the world, as a long succession of painters here, have so corrupted one another, that there is hardly to be found one ideal beauty in any Italian painter of the day. I should have the greatest obligation to you imaginable, if you would favour me with your discourse at the opening of the Academy, which you were so obliging as to promise in your letter. I long to read it in our coffee-house; as I could wish, by way of revenge upon the enemies of art, to inspire all sorts of artists with that enthusiasm for their profession, which will give vigour to the prosecution of study, and which, (from what I have seen in the Idler) I am sure your discourses must abound with. "I am, dear Sir,

"With the greatest respect and love,

"Your most obliged,

"And very humble Servant,

"J. B.

"I shall be very particular and careful in making such collections of the institutions of the several academies as I can.

"I am tempted to say, by way of apology, for that part of my attention, which, as you observe, was employed upon my disputes with some people here, that though I have found it impossible for me not to be uneasy at it, as I saw what advantages it deprived me of (not copying as you suppose) I saw also an artist for whose person and abilities I had the greatest value, helped out of the world, rather, I am afraid, before his time, and the same thing had happened here before to one Crawley a sculptor. It is impossible I say, for me not to have been moved at it, and if love of art, friendship for an ingenious man, who was doing honor to it, and regard to my own character as a man, and situation as an artist, here a burthen to my friends in England, and deprived of any occasion that might offer for lightening that burden; if these things could not move me, I do not know what would; but as you so kindly interest yourself in my welfare, I will assure you with great truth, that I have taken care that those anxieties should never interfere with my plan of study, which I saw clearly enough, was the only pillar upon which must be founded all my hopes.

"You will oblige me in shewing this letter to Mr. Burke and family, as I shall not write for a

few posts to come, and yet would be glad they knew I was alive and well.

"For Heaven's sake contrive it so as to get casts and moulds made for the academy of the four basso-relievos in the garden of the Villa Medici; the Christ of Michael Angelo, the arms of his Moses, and a good many antiques, of which there are moulds made."

I have inserted this long letter, because I think it contains many good and useful hints in respect to the mode of study, which young Artists should pursue.

In the month of October, this year, Sir Joshua was called on to attend the sessions in the Old Bailey, in company with Dr. Johnson, Garrick, Dr. Goldsmith, and several other distinguished characters, to give evidence to character in favor of the well known Mr. Baretti, in consequence of his being obliged to stand trial under a verdict of manslaughter, found against him by a coroner's inquest, on the 10th of the month.

This unfortunate circumstance arose from Mr. Baretti having been attacked on the 5th in the evening, at the end of Panton-street, going into the Haymarket, by a prostitute, who rudely and indecently accosted him. He pushed her from him, but she, finding by his accent that he was a foreigner, immediately called him by the most opprobrious names; and her loud tones having

brought up a bully, he began to assault Mr. Baretti in the most outrageous manner.

Some more of the gang then approached, and attempted to hustle him; when he was obliged, in his defence, to pull out a small knife, warning them not to use him ill, that he would not bear it, and would strike the first person that should come near him.

He then ran, and as they pursued him, he kept moving his hand backward and forward in running from them, to defend himself, and thus wounded two of his assailants, one of whom died afterwards in the Middlesex hospital. The crowd was now so great, that Mr. Baretti, no longer in dread of his life, immediately submitted himself, and was committed by Sir John Fielding to Tothill-fields prison.

The coroner's inquest sat two days before they brought in their verdict, when Baretti was admitted to bail, and the trial taking place on the 23rd, he refused to avail himself of the usual privilege of having half his jury composed of foreigners; but the evidences for the prosecution so completely contradicted themselves and each other, that little more was necessary than for him to explain the circumstances, which he did, justifying the act as one of self-defence, after having been repeatedly struck and abused; at the same time asserting, that the knife was drawn only to terrify, and not

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to wound, though the pressing of the populace in his retreat had, in a moment of agitation, led him further than he at first intended.

This was confirmed by some most respectable eye-witnesses; and the host of brilliant evidence, in favour of his general character, immediately drew forth a verdict of acquittal, to the complete satisfaction of the court and of the public at large.

The only pupil whom Sir Joshua had at this period was Mr. Charles Gill, son of a person at Bath, whose exquisite taste as a pastry cook has been particularly noticed by Anstey in his celebrated poem. Mr. Gill, the younger, has, however, not been so celebrated in his art, and is unhappily one of those whom Mr. Edwards notices to have been peculiarly unfortunate, having received a very severe wound in his thigh, which has deprived him of the use of his leg.*

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* Whilst speaking of Sir Joshua's pupils, I shall take the liberty to introduce an anecdote of Mr. Gill's father, as it was related to me by the son Charles.

Mr. Gill, senior, the noted pastry cook of Bath, was a stout well-made athletic man, that might intimidate, even by his appearance only; and as he was travelling once in a post-chaise alone, on the road between London and Bath, it was his chance to espy a highwayman making his way up to the chaise with an intention to rob him. At this, Mr. Gill's heart failed him; and in order to get the fearful business over as quick as possible, he took out his purse in readiness to deliver it to the highwayman, even before it was demanded; and when the robber approached near to the chaise-window, Gill not being very deliberate in what

To return to our subject, Sir Joshua during part of this year appears to have been deprived of his sister's domestic attentions, by a visit to Paris. This has been noticed by Dr. Johnson, in a letter to a Miss Flint, a very young lady who had translated his Strictures on Shakspeare into French, and was then resident at that gay metropolis. He says, "How can you prevent me from complaining of those charms by which you have gained so much on Miss Reynolds, that she no longer remembers her country nor her friends? It is but a trifle for you to praise us; it is a trifle to spread our literary fame, whilst you deprive us of the pleasure of seeing and of conversing with Miss Reynolds. In short, Madam, *you* must become less amiable, if you wish that we should love you more."

Miss Reynolds had accompanied Miss Flint to Paris. This Miss Flint afterwards became Ma-

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he did, and eager to show his willingness to comply with any demand that should be made, thrust his head through the window, not perceiving, in his hurry, that the glass was up, and broke it into shivers. This violent act alarmed the highwayman, who concluded it must be the result of invincible intrepidity, and accordingly he turned about his horse, and immediately rode off, thinking it best not to have any thing to do with such a lion-hearted fellow: but Gill, still apprehending danger, thought the robber would take him by surprize, by firing his pistol at him through the back of the carriage; and therefore, to be the more secure, he instantly laid himself down at the bottom of the chaise, and thus continued his journey.

dame de Reverall, having married one of the noblesse of France, and being left a widow, the unfortunate lady, together with her only son, was guillotined by those wretches who possessed the power in the reign of terror.

At the time Miss Reynolds was in Paris, (as she informed me,) she attended a sale of pictures. It was a most capital collection, yet the sale was so private, that the catalogue was not printed, but handed about the room on a written paper. The collection contained many very fine portraits by Titian and Vandyke, besides various other subjects by the most eminent masters, particularly one by Rembrandt, historical, with figures the full size of life. On her describing the picture afterwards to Sir Joshua, he said it must, by her account of it, have been worth three thousand pounds at least. All of those she saw sold for next to nothing, for there were but few bidders in the room; and being without money herself to make purchases, she viewed with inward torture those precious articles knocked down for the most trifling sums. Indeed, the regret she felt at not being able to possess herself of such bargains had so great an effect on her, that she feared she should have fainted away in the auction-room. Some few she did buy, and at a very small price, which were very fine; these she sent to England, to her brother Sir Joshua, who, unluckily, not having a sufficient reliance on her

judgement in pictures, had not previously commissioned her to make any purchases for him.

Miss Frances Reynolds had long lived in the house of Sir Joshua, her brother, which she superintended in its domestic economy; but conceived, on some occasion, that she had not been so kindly treated as she deserved. This occasioned a small degree of coolness between them, and it was her intention to compose a letter, in order to explain to him her supposed grievances; yet the composition of this letter was an affair of great difficulty: she, therefore, consulted with her sage friend Dr. Johnson, who participated with her in her troubles, and voluntarily offered to write a letter himself, which when copied should pass as her own. This accordingly he performed; but when this letter* was produced by him for her approval, she felt herself obliged to reject it, as the whole contents of it were so very unlike her own diction, and so decidedly like his, that the intended deception would no more have passed with Sir Joshua, than if Johnson had attired himself in her cap and gown, and endeavoured to impose his identical person upon Sir Joshua as his sister.

It was also some time about this period, and previous to my becoming a pupil of Sir Joshua,

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* It began thus—

"I am well aware that complaints are always odious, but complain I must.

that a circumstance took place, highly illustrative of his character, and which I shall now detail, knowing it to be authentic.

Sir Joshua, as his usual custom, looked over the daily morning paper at his breakfast time; and on one of those perusals, whilst reading an account of the Old Bailey sessions, to his great astonishment, saw that a prisoner had been tried and condemned to death for a robbery committed on the person of one of his own servants, a negro who had been with him for some time. He immediately rung the bell for the servants, in order to make his inquiries, and was soon convinced of the truth of the matter related in the newspaper. This black man had lived in his service as footman for several years, and has been pourtrayed in several pictures, particularly in one of the Marquis of Granby, where he holds the horse of that General. Sir Joshua reprimanded this black servant for his conduct, and especially for not having informed him of this serious adventure; when the man said he had concealed it only to avoid the blame he should have incurred had he told it: he then related the following circumstances of the business, saying, that Mrs. Anna Williams (the old blind lady who lived at the house of Dr. Johnson) had, some time previous, dined at Sir Joshua's with Miss Reynolds; that in the evening she went home to Bolt-court, Fleet-street, in a hackney-coach, and that he had been sent to attend her to her house.

On his return he had met with companions who had detained him till so late an hour, that when he came to Sir Joshua's house, he found the doors were shut and all the servants gone to rest. In this dilemma he wandered in the street till he came to a watch-house, in which he took shelter for the remainder of the night, among the variety of miserable companions to be found in such places; and amidst this assembly of the wretched, the black man fell sound asleep, when a poor thief, who had been taken into custody by the constable of the night, perceiving, as the man slept, that he had a watch and money in his pocket (which was seen on his thigh), he seized an opportunity and stole the watch, and with a penknife cut through the pocket, and so possessed himself of the money. When the Black awaked from his nap, he soon discovered what had been done to his cost, and immediately gave the alarm, and a strict search was made through the company; when the various articles which the Black had lost were found in the possession of the unfortunate wretch who had stolen them. He was accordingly secured, and next morning carried before the Justice, and committed to take his trial at the Old Bailey, (the Black being bound over to prosecute), and, as we have seen, was at his trial cast and condemned to death. Sir Joshua, much affected by this recital, immediately sent his principal servant, Ralph Kirkly, to make all inquires

into the state of the criminal, and, if necessary, to relieve his wants in whatever way could be done. When Kirkly came to the prison, he was soon admitted to the cell of the prisoner, where he beheld the most wretched spectacle that imagination can conceive—a poor forlorn criminal, without a friend on earth who could relieve or assist him, and reduced almost to a skeleton by famine and by filth, waiting till the dreadful morning should arrive when he was to be rendered a terrible example by a violent death. Sir Joshua now ordered fresh cloathing to be sent to him, and also that the black servant as a penance, as well as an act of charity should carry to him every day a sufficient supply of food from his own table; and at that time Mr. E. Burke being very luckily in office he applied to him, and by their joint interest they got his sentence changed to transportation; when, after being furnished with all necessaries, he was sent out of the kingdom.

When Goldsmith first published his "Deserted Village," he dedicated it to his friend, Sir Joshua, in which he elegantly observes, "I can have no expectations, in an address of this kind, either to add to your reputation or to establish my own. You can gain nothing from my admiration, as I am ignorant of the art in which you are said to excel; and I may lose much by the severity of your judgement, as few have a juster taste in poetry than you. Setting interest, therefore, aside, to which I never

paid much attention, I must be indulged, at present, in following my affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this poem to you."

During the latter part of the year, Sir Joshua was much occupied in the preparation of his second discourse, which was delivered at the rooms of the Academy, on the 11th of December, 1769.

The general object of this lecture was to convey a brief code of instructions for improvement in the various arts which the Academy was intended to encourage; and these hints, as it was very justly observed at the time, were offered with the "ingenuous modesty of a man, who by excellence becomes conscious of defect, as hints founded upon his own previous mistakes, which might at least prevent industry from being misapplied."

Considering the study of painting in particular, as divided into three parts, he supposed the first, which was merely that of acquiring a facility of drawing any object, a tolerable readiness in the management of colours, and an acquaintance with the most simple and obvious of the rules of composition, to have been already passed through by the student; to whom he next recommended the absolute necessity of collecting subjects for expression, and of amassing a stock of ideas capable of being combined and varied agreeable to circumstances.

This he considered as forming the second period, in which the student was to endeavour to acquire a general knowledge of all that was already known and executed; in which, no longer under the tuition of any particular master, he was to regard himself solely as the pupil of the art, and thus to acquire and combine all the perfections scattered through the works of the most celebrated of past times, and of the various schools.

In this part of the progress, though the student was to be at liberty to regulate his taste, and to enlarge the powers of his imagination, still was he to consider himself as restricted by certain rules, and so much in subjection and discipline under the art in general, as not to be permitted to resign himself to any particular authority, much less to deviate into any track where he could perceive no antecedent footsteps.

Having gone through the second, and arrived at the last stage, he considered the student as then liberated from all former authority, and to be now guided solely by judgement: being thus placed, if not upon an equality, yet in the same rank with those who had preceded him; and even as exercising a portion of sovereignty over those very rules by which he himself had been governed in the former course of his studies.

At this period, too, he described him as justified in adopting a new mode of judgement; being no longer bound to compare the productions of

rat with each other, but to examine the art itself by Nature's own standard, and thus to correct its errors, and supply its defects.

With a memory thus stored, and a judgement thus directed, then, but not till then, was the student to try the power of imagination, nay, even to give it the reins; for he asserted, that "the man whose mind has been thus disciplined, might be indulged in the warmest enthusiasm, and might even venture to play on the borders of the wildest extravagance; as then the habitual dignity, which long converse with the greatest minds has imparted to him, will display itself in all his attempts, and he will stand among his instructors, not as an imitator, but as a rival." He assumed, that invention was little more than a new combination of such images as have been already treasured up in the memory, so that he whose mind was best stored with images would most certainly be the most capable of invention; and thus, that he who was best acquainted with the compositions of others, would be the most capable of originality.

Of course it followed, as he premised, that such artists as toil on in the dull drudgery of copying, though they might, indeed, faithfully exhibit the minutest part of some favourite composition, would, however, never arrive at any excellence. This position, so much at variance with the rules then generally adopted, he explained by the ob-

servation, that, of the best large compositions, a great part was always common-place, which, though it takes much time to copy, could conduce but little to improvement. It follows, of course, as he observes, that imitation should always be preceded by selection; but still, as that requires no effort of the mind, so would the powers of invention and composition become torpid and devoid of energy from want of exercise, instead of being kept, as they ought to be, in constant practice.

Indeed, he confined the use of copying solely to the learning to colour; though even that branch of the art can never be acquired by a servile copyist. And here too, he pointed out, that a skilful artist would always rather consider what the productions of the ancient masters had been, than what they are now, when changed by dirt and varnish; and from hence he again pointed out the necessity to copy Nature herself, in comparison with whose hues, the best coloured pictures are but faint and feeble and therefore most likely to give the youthful student ideas totally distinct from either art or nature.

In addition to these hints, he allowed that copying might be so far proper, as to make slight sketches of the machinery and general management of any admired picture, in order to preserve these for future regulations of style, so that the student, instead of copying the touches of the great masters, would only copy their conceptions.

Yet, in these general observations, it was not his intention to do away models in painting: but instead of advising the student to paint a copy, he recommended to him to paint a companion; so that, by comparing the two carefully together, he might best see his own defects, and be thereby taught to guard against them.

In this most important part of the art, he recommended Ludovico Caracchi as the best model for style, and this he accompanied by some most judicious remarks, but too long for insertion here: and his concluding observations are highly worthy the attention of all students, showing them that to excel, they must always consider that "Excellence is never granted to man but as the reward of Labour."

1770.

ÆTAT. 46.

About the year 1770, Dr. Goldsmith lost his mother, who died in Ireland. On this occasion, he immediately dressed himself in a suit of cloathes of grey cloth, trimmed with black, such as is commonly worn for second mourning. When he appeared the first time after this at Sir Joshua Reynolds's house, Miss F. Reynolds, the sister of Sir Joshua, asked him whom he had lost, as she saw he wore mourning, when he answered, a distant relation only; being shy, as I conjecture, to own that he.

wore such slight mourning for so near a relative. This appears in him an unaccountable blunder in wearing such a dress: as all those who did not know his mother, or of her death, would not expect or require him to wear mourning at all, and to all those who knew of his mother's death it would appear to be not the proper dress of mourning for so near a relative; so that he satisfied nobody and displeased some: for Miss Reynolds, who afterwards heard of his mother's decease, thought it unfeeling in him to call her a distant relation.

In the year 1770, died a former pupil of Sir Joshua's of the name of Dusign. His father was a colonel in the army, and his mother daughter of the Earl of Hyndford, a Scottish peer. After quitting Sir Joshua, he practised for a few years, at Bath, where his family resided; but the desire of improving himself in his art induced him to proceed to Rome, and there he soon after died of a consumption. About this time, also, a little circumstance took place, which, from its connection with the art, deserves a record here.

Most persons remember the lines by Pope which begin thus:

> "Come, gentle air! th' Æolian shepherd said,
> While Procris panted in the secret shade."——

These verses, it is well known, Pope sent to Miss Martha Blount, accompanied with a fan, on

which was represented the story of Cephalus and Procris, designed and painted by himself, with the motto "*Aura Veni.*"

After the death of Miss Blount, this fan, with other effects, was sold by public auction, and Sir Joshua Reynolds sent a person to bid for it, as far as thirty guineas; but the man who was intrusted with the commission mistook the mark in the catalogue, and thought it could mean no more than thirty shillings, as that sum seemed a very sufficient price for a fan. As it sold, however, for about two pounds, he lost the purchase; but, luckily, it was bought by a dealer in toys, and Sir Joshua got it by giving him a reasonable profit on his bargain. The fan was afterwards stolen from him.

Sir Joshua's opinion of the degree of skill with which it was painted, being asked; he replied, that it was such as might have been expected from one who painted for his amusement alone;—like the performance of a child. "This must always be the case when the work is taken up only from idleness, and laid aside when it ceases to amuse any longer. But those," he added, "who are determined to excel, must go to their work whether willing or unwilling, morning, noon, and night, and will find it to be no play, but, on the contrary, very hard labour."

This was said to his pupils; and in this mode only it was that he ever gave any instruction to

them, when accident produced an opportunity to give it force.

Sir Joshua's close attention to his profession required a certain portion of relaxation and social intercourse with his friends; and about the year 1770, he, as stated by Mr. Cumberland, was one of a very pleasant society, which, without having the name of a club, was accustomed to dine together, on stated days, at the British Coffee House.

This society was composed of men of the first eminence for their talents; and as there was no exclusion, in the system, of any member's friend or friends, their parties were continually enlivened by the introduction of new guests, who, of course, furnished new sources for conversation, from which politics and party seemed, by general consent, decidedly proscribed.

Such a society might, no doubt, have been highly agreeable; but its description, thus strongly marked by Mr. Cumberland, seems rather drawn up in contradistinction to the Literary Club, of which he was not a member.

This society at the British Coffee House must, however, with the exception of Johnson's conversation, have made him amends for any exclusion from the other; for here were Foote, Fitzherbert, Garrick, Macpherson, Doctors Carlisle, Robinson, and Beattie, Caleb Whiteford, and "though last, not least," Sir Joshua Reynolds, who introduced Goldsmith as a member, immediately previous to

the representation of his comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer."

It was about this time, too, that the so often told circumstance of the *Epitaphs* took place. The occurrences which led to this display of witticism, have been variously detailed. I shall, therefore, insert Mr. Cumberland's account of it, as it contains some particulars not otherwise generally known.

He says, that it was on a proposal started by Edmund Burke, that a party of friends who had dined together at Sir Joshua's, and at his house, should meet at the St. James's Coffee House, which accordingly took place, and was occasionally repeated with much festivity and good fellowship. Dr. Barnard, Dean of Derry, Dr. Douglas, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, Johnson, Garrick, Sir Joshua, Goldsmith, Edmund and Richard Burke, Hickey, an attorney, an Irishman, and a friend of the Burkes, commemorated by Goldsmith, and two or three others, constituted the party.

It was at one of these meetings that the idea was suggested of extempore epitaphs upon the parties present; pens and ink were called for, and Garrick, off hand, with a good deal of humour, wrote the epitaph upon poor Goldsmith, who was the first *in jest*, as he proved *in reality*, that was committed to the grave.

The Dean also gave him an epitaph, and Sir Joshua illuminated the Dean's verses with a sketch

of his bust in pen and ink, which Mr. C. states to have been inimitably caricatured; but this does not appear to me like an act of Sir Josh ua's, no did I ever hear it mentioned by any other author.

These circumstances were of course sufficient to prompt Goldsmith to his well known poem of "Retaliation," which, however, was written with such good temper, as to shew that he was fully convinced of the pleasantries of his friends having been solely produced by the harmless mirth of the moment. It was an observation or pun of Edmund Burke's on this occasion, "That an Epitaph is *a grave* Epigram."

It is probable that whoever reads this Memoir, must have already seen that celebrated poem; yet still his delineation of Sir Joshua is too accurate to be here omitted.

"Here Reynolds is laid; and to tell you my mind,
He has not left a better or wiser behind;
His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand,
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;
Still born to improve us in every part,
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart:
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,
When they judged without skill, he was still hard of hearing;
When they talked of their Raffaelles, Corregios, and stuff,
He shifted his trumpet,* and only took snuff!"

In the poetical epistle addressed to Goldsmith, by Cumberland, as a supplement to his Poem, are the following lines:

* His ear trumpet which he used being deaf.

"Pour forth to Reynolds without stint,
Rich Burgundy, of Ruby tint;
If e'er his colours chance to fade,
This brilliant hue shall come in aid;
With ruddy lights refresh the faces,
And warm the bosoms of the Graces."

These lines certainly savour much of their author.

When first the cross readings, ship news, and mistakes of the press, appeared in the newspapers of the day, they attracted universal attention, and the lucky invention so much delighted Dr. Goldsmith, that he declared, in the heat of his admiration of them, it would have given him more pleasure to have been the author of them, than of all the works he had ever published of his own: and he particularly admired the happy thought in the signature, which was *Papyrius Cursor*.

They were sketched by the late Caleb Whiteford, who was one of the members when the epitaphs were written. On that occasion, Whiteford wrote two on Goldsmith and Cumberland, with which they were both so displeased, that he did not attend at the next meeting, but addressed the following apology to Sir Joshua.

"Admire not, dear Knight!
That I keep out of sight,
Consider what perils await him,
Who with ill season'd jokes
Indiscreetly provokes
The *Genus irritabile Vatum*.

I felt when these swains
Rehears'd their sweet strains,
That mine had too much lemon juice;
And strove to conceal,
For the general weal,
What at last I was forc'd to produce.

After such panegyric
The least thing satiric
Must throw both the Bards in the twitters;
'Twas impossible they,
After drinking Tokay,
Could relish a bumper of *bitters*.

Do talk to each bard,
Beg they won't be too hard,
But be merciful as they are stout;
I rely on your skill,
Say just what you will,
And as YOU brought me *in* bring me *out*!

To the company too,
Some apology's due,
I know you can do it with ease;
Be it your's, Sir, to place,
In the *best light*, my case,
And give it what *colour* you please.

For those brats of my brain,
Which have caus'd so much pain,
Henceforth I renounce and disown 'em;
And still keep in sight,
When I epitaphs write,
De mortuis nil nisi bonum."

With this whimsical request it is said Sir Joshua complied, and by his friendly exertions succeeded in restoring that harmony which had thus been

interrupted by the irritability of those who were annoyed by Caleb's briskness.

It is scarcely necessary to enter into the particulars of the well known anecdote of Dr. Barnard, already mentioned as a member of this society; when having advanced in conversation with Sir Joshua and Dr. Johnson, that he thought no man could improve who was past the age of forty-five, the latter immediately turned round to the Dean and observed, "that he (the Dean) was an instance to the contrary; for there was great room for improvement in him, and he wished that he would set about it."

This blunt speech shocked the Dean so much, that for some little time he could not make an answer; but recollecting himself, he replied, "that he agreed that sometimes they did alter by growing more blunt and brutish."

The next day he sent a very elegant poetic epistle, addressed to "Sir Joshua Reynolds and Co." and as part of those stanzas is highly descriptive of Sir Joshua, I shall not only insert that passage, but the whole in order to make it more intelligible and impressive.

"I lately thought no man alive,
Could e'er improve past forty-five,
And ventur'd to assert it;
The observation was not new,
But seemed to me so just and true,
That none could controvert it.

No, Sir! says Johnson, 'tis not so,
That's your mistake, and I can shew,
An instance if you doubt it;
You, Sir! who are near forty-eight,
May much improve, 'tis not too late;
I wish you'd set about it.

Encourag'd thus to mend my faults,
I turn'd his counsel in my thoughts,
Which way I should apply it;
Learning and wit seem'd past my reach,
For who can learn, when none will teach,
And wit—I could not buy it.

Then come, my friends, and try your skill,
You can inform me if you will,
(My books are at a distance;)
With you I'll live and learn, and then,
Instead of books, I shall read men,
So lend me your assistance.

Dear Knight of Plympton, tell me how
To suffer with unruffled brow,
And smile serene like thine;
The jest uncouth, or truth severe,
To such I'll turn my deafest ear,
And calmly drink my wine.

Thou say'st not only skill is gain'd,
But genius too may be attain'd,
By studious imitation;
Thy temper mild, thy genius fine,
I'll copy till I make them mine
By constant application.

Thy art of pleasing teach me, Garrick!
Thou who reversest odes Pindarick,*
A second time read o'er;

* Garrick had said that Cumberland's Odes might be read either backwards or forwards, with equal beauty and precision.

Oh could we read thee backwards too,
Last thirty years thou shouldst review,
And charm us thirty more.

If I have thoughts, and can't express them,
Gibbon shall teach me how to dress them,
In terms select and terse;
Jones teach me modesty and Greek,
Smith how to think, Burke how to speak,
And Beauclerk to converse.

Let Johnson teach me how to place,
In fairest light, each borrow'd grace,
From him I'll learn to write;
Copy his clear, familiar style,
And from the roughness of his file
Grow like himself—polite."

In the midst of all this excellent society, Sir Joshua still attended sedulously to his profession; and in the year (1770,) his price for a head was raised to thirty-five guineas: his own portrait was also painted about this time by Zoffanii, in a large picture, in which were represented all the first members of the Royal Academy, and now in the King's collection. This group of portraits was afterwards engraved by Earlom.

On the 14th of December he produced his third discourse, whose leading objects were a delineation of the great and essential principles of the grand style, an investigation of beauty, and a series of arguments to prove that the genuine habits of nature are totally distinct from those of fashion.

He commenced this discourse by adverting to a great difficulty which operated against him in the arrangement of each discourse; that was the circumstance of his being obliged to direct his advice to an assembly composed of so many students, of different ages, and of different degrees of advancement. In speaking afterwards of the close attention to be paid to nature, he still warned the student that even nature herself is not to be too closely copied; and he added, that there are excellencies in the art of painting beyond what is commonly called the imitation of nature; so that a mere copier of nature can never produce any thing great, can never raise and enlarge the conceptions, nor warm the heart of the spectator.

He therefore recommended to the genuine painter to have more extensive objects in view, and instead of endeavouring to amuse mankind with the minute neatness of his imitations, rather to endeavour to improve them by the grandeur of his ideas; and thus to strive for fame by captivating the imagination, instead of seeking praise by the silly attempt at deceiving the senses. The correctness of this principle he considered as so absolute in itself, as not to require the aid of novelty to recommend it, and he shewed that it was from the earliest times enforced by the poets, orators, and rhetoricians of antiquity, as well as supported by the general opinion of the enlightened part of

mankind; giving, at the same time, appropriate quotations from the classic authorities.

To this he added, "that the moderns are not less convinced than the ancients of this superior power (of the ideal beauty), existing in the art; nor less sensible of its effects. Every language has adopted terms expressive of this excellence. The *gusto grande* of the Italians, the *beau ideal* of the French, and the *great style*, *genius*, and *taste*, among the English, are but different appellations of the same thing. It is this intellectual dignity, they say, that ennobles the painter's art; that lays the line between him and the mere mechanic; and produces those great effects in an instant, which eloquence and poetry, by slow and repeated efforts, are scarcely able to attain."

He confessed, indeed, that it is not easy to define in what this *great style* consists; nor to describe, by words, the proper means of acquiring it, even if the mind of the student should be highly capable of such an acquisition; for if taste or genius were to be taught by rules, then they would no longer be taste or genius. Still, although there neither are, nor can be, any precise invariable rules for the exercise of the acquisition of these great qualities, yet, as he expressed himself, they always operate in proportion to our attention in observing the works of nature, to our skill in selecting, and to our care in digesting, methodizing, and comparing our observations.

He therefore recommended a long and strict examination both of the beauties and defects of nature, by which means the student is enabled to acquire a just idea of her beautiful forms, and to correct nature by herself, her imperfect state by her more perfect.

The eye being thus enabled to distinguish the beauties and deficiencies, as well as the deformities, the judgement is then enabled, as he observed, to make out an abstract idea of the general forms of things, more perfect than any one original, "and, what may seem a paradox, the student learns to design naturally by drawing his figures unlike to any one object."

This then, he described to be "Ideal Beauty," the idea of the perfect state of nature, that great leading principle by which works of genius are conducted; an idea which has acquired and which seems to have a right to the epithet of divine, "as it may be said to preside like a supreme judge over all the productions of nature, appearing to be possessed of the will and intention of the Creator, as far as they regard the external form of living beings." He added, that when a man once possesses this idea in its perfection, there is no danger but that he will be sufficiently warmed by it himself, and also be enabled to warm and ravish every one else.

With respect to *fashion*, he laid it down as a principle, that however the mechanick and orna-

mental arts may be obliged, or even permitted, to sacrifice to her, yet she must be entirely excluded from any control over the art of painting: wherefore the painter must never mistake this capricious changeling for the genuine offspring of nature, but must divest himself of all prejudices in favour of his age and country; and must even disregard all local and temporary ornaments, looking only on those general habits which are every where and always the same; addressing his works to the people of every age and every country, and even calling upon posterity to be his spectators.

Here he took occasion to reprobate the ridiculous frippery of the style of French painting in the time of Louis XIV: but acknowledged, that to avoid the errors of that school, and to retain the true simplicity of nature, is still a task more difficult than may appear at first sight; as the prejudices in favour of the fashions and customs to which we have been used, and which are justly called a second nature, make it often difficult to distinguish that which is natural from that which is the result of education. Our only guides and instructors, then, he asserted, are to be found among the ancients; by a careful study of whose works, the artist and the man of taste will be enabled to form a just conception of the real simplicity of nature: to which he added, "they will suggest many observations which would probably escape you, if your study were confined to nature

alone, and indeed, I cannot help suspecting, that in this instance the ancients had an easier task than the moderns. They had, probably, little or nothing to unlearn, as their manners were nearly approaching to this desirable simplicity; while the modern artist, before he can see the truth of things, is obliged to remove a veil, with which the fashion of the times has thought proper to cover her."

After some very judicious observations on the imitators of nature in her lowest forms, and justly reprobating them in some instances, he concluded his admirable discourse, by warning his hearers not to consider him as countenancing a careless or undetermined manner of painting; adding, that although the painter is certainly to overlook the accidental discriminations of nature, yet he is still to exhibit distinctly and with precision, the general forms of things; wherefore a firm and determined outline is one of the characteristics of the great style in painting: to which he subjoined the important truism, that he who possesses the knowledge of the exact form which every part of nature ought to have, will be fond of expressing that knowledge with correctness and precision in all his works.

Before we close this year, I may mention a pupil who was a short time with Sir Joshua, and introduced to him about this period, at the earnest solicitation of Dr. Goldsmith. His name was

Thomas Clark, born in Ireland, and educated at the Academy of Dublin. He drew very well, particularly the head, but had very little notion of colouring; and, not having had much practice in painting, could be of very little assistance to Sir Joshua: therefore, they soon parted. He died young, but when or where I know not.

1771.

ÆTAT. 47.

It was in the year 1771, that I was first placed under the tuition of Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom I was introduced, and strongly recommended by my good and much respected friend Dr. John Mudge. If I might now be suffered to say a little of myself, I would declare, that I feel it next to impossible to express the pleasure I received in breathing, if it may be so said, in an atmosphere of art; having until this period been entirely debarred, not only from the practice of the art itself, but even from the sight of pictures of any excellence, as the county of Devon at that time did not abound with specimens, and even those few which are scattered about that country I had no opportunity of ever seeing; and as, from the earliest period of my being able to make any observation, I had conceived Reynolds to be the greatest painter that ever lived, it may be conjectured what I felt when I found myself in his

house as his scholar; but as the admiration and respect which I now honestly confess I always felt for him, render me liable to be considered a partial judge of his various merits, this consideration inclines me to give the authorities of others, in preference to my own, whenever it will serve my purpose—of such as knew him well, and may be considered as less prejudiced encomiasts.

As one prominent cause of Sir Joshua's cultivating the very best society, and which almost may be said to have been domesticated with him, Mr. Malone is correct in stating, that finding how little time he could spare from his profession, for the purpose of acquiring, and adding to his knowledge from books, he very early and wisely resolved to partake, as much as possible, of the society of all the ingenious and learned men of his own time; in consequence of which, and his unassuming and gentle manner, and refined habits, his table, for above thirty years, exhibited an assemblage of all the talents of Great Britain and Ireland: there being, during that period, scarce a person in the three kingdoms distinguished for his attainments in literature or the arts, or for his exertions at the bar, in the senate, or the field, who was not occasionally found there.

In addition to this, it has been stated by the author of "Testimonies to his genius," that the circle of his acquaintance, owing to the celebrity of his name, was very extended; that many illustri-

ous foreigners were on a footing of personal intimacy with him; and that he was resorted to by persons of the highest quality, who revered his genius as much as they respected the excellence of his private character. Thence, his house was long the resort of excellence of every kind, of the learned, the elegant, the polite, in short of all that were eminent for worth, or distinguished by genius. "From such connections, his mind, rich in its own store, received an accession of most extensive knowledge, and an inexhaustible treasure for conversation. He was rich in observation, anecdote, and intelligence."

To such testimonies as those my own suffrage is unnecessary: I shall therefore only observe, that, among the many advantages which were to be gained in the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds, one of the most considerable certainly was, the opportunity of improvement from the familiar intercourse which he thus perpetually kept up with the most eminent men of his time for genius and learning.

A few anecdotes of some of those persons I have collected, and have inserted many which are new and not to be found in any other writer; for, of the illustrious dead, even the slightest memorials are ever received with a degree of reverence; and though but trifles in themselves, yet as they relate to distinguished characters, we consider them as a kind of relics, and attend to each little

circumstance with the same religious enthusiasm as the devotee follows the footsteps of his saint. They help to transport the mind back to the very period in which the occurrences were passing, and for a time we seem to be existing in a former age. Therefore, without further apology, I shall give those which at this time occur to my recollection.

Dr. Johnson being in company with Sir Joshua and his sister, Miss Reynolds, and the conversation turning on morality; Sir Joshua said, he did not think there was in the world any man completely wicked.

Johnson answered, "I do not know what you mean by completely wicked."

"I mean," returned Sir Joshua, "a man lost to all sense of shame." Dr. Johnson replied, that "to be completely wicked a man must be also lost to all sense of conscience."

Sir Joshua said, he thought it was exactly the same—he could see no difference.

"What!" said Johnson, "can you see no difference? I am ashamed to hear you or any-body utter such nonsense; when the one relates to men, only, the other to God!"

Miss Reynolds then observed, that when shame was lost, conscience was nearly gone.

Johnson agreed that her conclusion was very just.

Dr. Johnson was displeased if he supposed himself at any time made the object of idle curiosity.

When Miss Reynolds once desired him to dine at Sir Joshua's, on a day fixed upon by herself, he readily accepted the invitation; yet having doubts as to the importance of her companions, or of her reasons for inviting him, he added, at the same time, "But I will not be made a show of."

James Mac Ardell, the mezzotinto engraver, having taken a very good print from the portrait of Rubens, came with it one morning to Sir Joshua Reynolds, to inquire if he could inform him particularly of the many titles to which Rubens had a right, in order to inscribe them properly under his print; saying, he believed that Rubens had been knighted by the kings of France, Spain, and England; was secretary of state in Flanders, and of the privy council in Spain; and had been employed in a ministerial capacity from the court of Madrid to the court of London, to negotiate a treaty of peace between the two crowns, and that he was also a magistrate of Antwerp, &c.

Dr. Johnson happened to be in the room with Sir Joshua at the time, and understanding Mac Ardell's inquiry, interfered rather abruptly, saying, "Pooh! pooh! put his name alone under the print, Peter Paul Rubens: that is full sufficient, and more that all the rest."

This advice of the Doctor was accordingly followed.

At the time that Miss Linley was in the highest esteem as a public singer, Dr. Johnson came in

the evening to drink tea with Miss Reynolds, and when he entered the room, she said to him, "See, Dr. Johnson, what a preference I give to your company; for I had an offer of a place in a box at the oratorio, to hear Miss Linley: but I would rather sit with you than hear Miss Linley sing." "And I, Madam," replied Johnson, "would rather sit with you than sit upon a throne."

The Doctor would not be surpassed even in a trifling compliment.

Several ladies being in company with Dr. Johnson, it was remarked by one of them, that a learned woman was by no means a rare character in the present age: when Johnson replied, "I have known a great many ladies who, I was told, knew Latin, but very few who know English."

A lady oberved, that women surpassed men in epistolary correspondence. Johnson said, "I do not know that." "At least," said the lady, "they are most pleasing when they are in conversation."—"No, Madam," returned Johnson, "I think they are most pleasing when they hold their tongues."

A friend of Dr. Johnson's, in conversation with him, was lamenting the disagreeable situation in which those persons stood who were eminent for their witticisms, as they were perpetually expected to be saying good things—that it was a heavy tax on them.

"It is indeed," said Johnson, "a very heavy tax on them; a tax which no man can pay who does not steal."

A prosing dull companion was making a long harangue to Dr. Johnson upon the *Punic war*, in which he gave nothing either new or entertaining. Johnson, afterwards, speaking of the circumstance to a friend, said, "Sir, I soon withdrew my attention from him, and thought of Tom Thumb."

A young gentleman, who was bred to the Bar, having a great desire to be in company with Dr. Johnson, was, in consequence, invited by Miss Reynolds, Sir Joshua's sister, to meet him at their house. When the interview took place, they fell into deep conversation on politics, and the different governments in Europe, particularly that of Venice. Miss Reynolds, who related the anecdote, said, that as it was a subject which she neither liked nor understood, she did not attend to the conversation, except to hear that the young man was humbly making his inquiries to gain all possible information from the profound knowledge of Dr. Johnson; when her attention was suddenly attracted by the Doctor exclaiming, in a very loud and peremptory tone of voice, "Yes, Sir, I know very well, that all republican rascals think as you do!"

One morning, when Garrick paid a visit to Sir Joshua, in the course of conversation he was very

freely giving his opinion upon an eminent author of that time; he particularly condemned his dramatic works, respecting which he expressed himself in these words: "Damn his dish-clout face; his plays would never do for the stage if I did not cook them up and make prologues and epilogues for him, so that they go down with the public." He also added, "he hates you, Sir Joshua, because you do not admire the painter whom he considers as a second Corregio. "Who is that?" replied Sir Joshua. "Why, his Corregio," answered Garrick, "is Romney the painter!"

I remember to have heard Garrick complain that it was a very great fatigue to him to dine in company so frequently as his interest seemed to require. From hence we may conclude, that he considered himself as under the necessity of being a very delightful companion, which he certainly was: but had he been content to be like other persons at table, it would have then been no fatigue to him. On the same account he avoided ever going to a masquerade in any specific personification, as that would have involved him in the difficulty of supporting his character as a wit.

Sir Joshua had given to Dr. Johnson a copy of that portrait now at Knowle, the seat of the late Duke of Dorset, in which the Doctor is represented with his hands held up, and in his own short hair; it is nearly a profile, and there has been a print

taken from it, which portrait the Doctor notices this year in the following letter:

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, IN LEICESTER-FIELDS.

"DEAR SIR,

"When I came to Lichfield, I found that my portrait had been much visited and much admired. Every man has a lurking wish to appear considerable in his native place; and I was pleased with the dignity conferred by such a testimony of your regard.

"Be pleased, therefore, to accept the thanks of,

"Sir,

"Your most obliged and humble servant,

"*Ashbourne, in Derbyshire,* "SAM. JOHNSON.

"*July* 17, 1771.

"Compliments to Miss Reynolds."

Dr. Johnson knew nothing of the art of painting either in theory or practice, which is one proof that he could not be the author of Sir Joshua's discourses; indeed, his imperfect sight was some excuse for his total ignorance in that department of study. Once being at dinner at Sir Joshua's, in company with many painters, in the course of conversation Richardson's Treatise on Painting happened to be mentioned, "Ah!" said Johnson, "I remember, when I was at college, I by chance found that book on my stairs: I took it up with me to my chamber, and read it through, and truly

I did not think it possible to say so much upon the art." Sir Joshua, who could not hear distinctly, desired of one of the company to be informed what Johnson had said; and it being repeated to him so loud that Johnson heard it, the Doctor seemed hurt, and added, "But I did not wish, Sir, that Sir Joshua should have been told what I then said."

The latter speech of Johnson denotes a delicacy in him, and an unwillingness to offend; and it evinces a part of his character which he has not had the credit of having ever possessed.

Sir John Hawkins also observes very well of Johnson, that of the beauties of painting, notwithstanding the many eulogiums on the art, which, after the commencement of his friendship with Sir Joshua, he inserted in his writings, he had not the least conception; indeed he said once to Sir John, that in his whole life he was never capable of discerning the least resemblance of any kind, between a picture and the subject it was designed to represent.

Those who wish to know more of his sentiments upon the art, may find a specimen in an anecdote related by Mrs. Piozzi on that subject, in the 98th page of her book.

The circumstance occurred at a dinner party at Mr. Thrale's: and as the account given by Mrs. Piozzi deserves some notice, I shall repeat that when Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned some pic-

ture as excellent; "It has often grieved me, Sir, (said Dr. Johnson) to see so much mind as the science of painting requires, laid out upon such perishable materials: why do you not oftener make use of copper? I could wish your superiority in the art you profess, to be preserved on stuff more durable than canvas." Sir Joshua urged the difficulty of procuring a plate large enough for historical subjects, and was going to raise further observations:—"What foppish obstacles are these!" (exclaimed on a sudden Dr. Johnson:) "Here is Thrale has a thousand ton of copper; you may paint it all round if you will, I suppose; it will serve him to brew in afterwards: will it not, Sir?" (speaking to Mr. Thrale, who sat by.) Indeed, Dr. Johnson's *affectation* of utter scorn of painting was such, that he used to say that he should sit very quietly in a room hung round with the works of the greatest masters, and never feel the slightest disposition to turn them, if their backs were outermost, unless it might be for the sake of telling Sir Joshua that he had turned them. But in his life of Savage, we find him far more cruel and unjust towards another profession, where he expresses his utter scorn of actors likewise, only because he wished to mortify Garrick, whose affluence, acquired in that profession, was the object of his envy. It was the prosperity of Sir Joshua also, as well as Garrick's, that was the crime with Johnson; notwithstanding the friendship and indulgence with

which they both always treated him, yet their worldly superiority created bitterness in his heart; and as he could not humble or despise the men, he therefore vented his spleen on their professions. Johnson had that weakness likewise which commonly attends men of all professions, of estimating that as the highest of which they know the most; thus we see how the bad passions may mislead the wisest men. But what most consoled his haughty spirit was to indulge himself in a philosophical contemplation of those who, possessing great abilities, were yet more wretched than himself, and as such had his compassion. Savage was his darling, in whose cause no labour nor ingenuity was to be spared in the attempt to vindicate the conduct of an impostor, chained down to misery by vice; but Savage he felt was his inferior; and had Garrick or Sir Joshua been as wretched as Savage, he would readily have done them as much service, and not have *pretended* to despise their professions.

Johnson ought to have reflected, that much of the prosperity of Sir Joshua and Garrick was a natural consequence of their virtues as well as of their abilities; and of an application incessant and untired, even to the injury of their constitutions, in order to become eminent in the departments they had adopted: whilst he was loitering away his time in idleness, and feeding at another man's table, whose profession or trade he held also in utter scorn. No wonder Johnson was not rich!

That he did not really in his heart despise painting, and was not so ignorant of its uses, may be seen in the accompanying observations on the department of portrait painting alone.

Johnson should have been informed also, that the duration of a picture does not depend on the strength or durability of the canvas on which it is painted. The canvas can be renewed as often as it may be found necessary, and the colours will in time become nearly as hard and as durable as enamel. It is by frequent and injudicious cleaning, and not by time, that pictures are destroyed.

But I shall give, as, perhaps, a more pleasing subject, some other ideas of Dr. Johnson, "that majestic teacher of moral and religious wisdom," who, in several places, thus speaks of portraits:

"Genius is chiefly exerted in historical pictures, and the art of the painter of portraits is often lost in the obscurity of his subject. But it is in painting as in life; what is greatest is not always best. I should grieve to see *Reynolds* transfer to heroes and to goddesses, to empty splendor and to airy fiction, that art, which is now employed in diffusing friendship, in renewing tenderness, in quickening the affections of the absent, and continuing the presence of the dead."

And again, "Every man is always present to himself, and has, therefore, little need of his own resemblance; nor can desire it but for the sake of those whom he loves, and by whom he hopes to

be remembered. This use of the art is a natural and reasonable consequence of affection; and though, like other human actions, it is often complicated with pride, yet even such pride is more laudable than that by which palaces are covered with pictures, that, however excellent, neither imply the owner's virtue, nor excite it."

This is certainly the best apology for portrait that has ever been given; and to it I shall here add a few observations of my own on this department of painting.

Under this view of art so well described by Johnson, it is that portrait may assume a dignity: and certain it is that all those portraits which have been executed by the higher order of painters have it; as we may perceive in them how much the genius of the artist has been able to discern, and faithfully to represent that which was characteristic and valuable in the individual which was his model, and thereby clearly demonstrated the possession of high powers.

But the reason why portrait painting is treated with so much contempt, is because there are more bad pictures of this class preserved than of any other branch in the art, on account of their local value, being the resemblance of some favourite object; whereas, the bad performances in any other branch of art having no value, are neglected and perish. It may be observed also, that more bad portrait painters get employment than bad painters

of any other class; which adds to the comparative plenty of those works: and this excessive plenty of bad portraits, from the above causes, has, in the end, given a degraded rank to that department. But could we see in portrait all the qualities displayed of which it is capable, it would be found to contain many of the highest merits of even history itself; and those, who treat it slightly, surely cannot have examined it with a sufficient attention, nor have had a clear idea of all its difficulties and merits. It appears to me to be, in many respects, similar to that of writing a distinct character of an individual; which, when it is done with justice and nice discrimination, I apprehend to be a greater effort of genius than to write the life or memoir.

In addition to what I have said on this branch of the art, I must not omit that there is another cause that operates much against the dignity of portrait painting, which is, that the work is executed in the presence of witnesses who see the slow progress of the business, and are made not only sensible of the difficulty and care with which the work is done, but also the frequent failure of the artist in his intentions. They can likewise interfere with their advice and directions, and often think themselves as well qualified to judge in the affair as the painter himself: thus they see the work in all its stages of rude imperfection, all of

which tend to degrade both the artist and his art in their estimation.

But on the contrary, with respect to those efforts of the mind which are never seen by the world till they are brought to their most perfect and finished state, where all the helps and all the failures have been kept in secret, and the work shown in public only when brought to the state of perfection, it then appears like a miracle, as if struck off at once by magic power; for it has been well observed that *poets*

> "——— Would not have half the praise they've got,
> Was it but known what they discreetly blot."

There is still another cause which has its weight against the importance of portraits, even sometimes when executed by good painters, as in particular instances it has rendered them ridiculous; this has happened when the artist has submitted to the ignorant interference and dictates of his employer, contrary to his own better judgement.

Sir Joshua preserved himself from this disgrace with eminent policy and skill.

I cannot quit this subject without noticing that it may be observed that every portrait is a compound, the different parts of which are supplied by the painter, assisted by the person who sits to be pourtrayed. The external form and shape of the features are the part required and taken from

the individual who is to be represented in the picture: but the character, the degree of mental power, and peculiarity of disposition, expressed in the portrait, are greatly dependent on the painter, and it is in the representation of those that he unconsciously infuses the prominent qualities of his own individual nature and turn of mind. Therefore, all portraits of the same person, when executed by different painters, will, from the above cause, differ from each other; although each of them may resemble the external form of the individual they are intended to represent.

In portraiture, perhaps, the first thing required is mechanical dexterity.

In history, certainly, the first requisite is great mental powers.

But to attain superior excellence in either, each is required in each.

But the department of portrait alone may be divided into different classes as practised by different professors according to their abilities and inclinations. Three are distinct, for instance; and first those portraits which are true but not ingenious, where their merit consists in a careful endeavour at similitude to the person represented, but in a manner dry, laboured, and tasteless: secondly, those which are ingenious but not true; in these much skill is often to be found, but then the pure imitation of nature has been sacrificed to ideal graces and adscititious beauties; Lely and

Kneller are instances; the consequence of which is, that manner and sameness become the poor substitutes for truth, variety, and nature. Such works are too much like each other to be like any thing else, and create no interest; but that order of portrait which does honour to the department is both true and ingenious, as may be exemplified in the works of Rembrandt, Velasquez, Vandyke, Reynolds, and Titian.

After all that has been said, there can be no doubt but that a decided superiority must be given to historical painting, when it is of the highest order, as it requires, of necessity, a much greater mass of acquired knowledge of every kind; also, because that in it is contained a large portion of the excellence of portrait, if not the whole: and when portraiture is compared with grand composition, it bears but as a part, and, of consequence, a part is much easier to accomplish than a whole.

Yet I will venture to say, that, in certain instances, I have seen groupes of portraits by Titian which have contained the essence of history; and history by Raffaelle which contained the essence of portrait: and it can scarcely be denied, that portrait, in its greatest degree of perfection, becomes a species of history, as it must possess its first merits, character, and expression; whilst history is not degraded by the introduction of dignified portrait. Therefore I am of opinion that it is a most useful and necessary part of the practice

of an historical painter, that he sometimes should recur to the close imitation of nature by employing himself in portrait, and not survey it with an improper pride. A strong proof of an ingenious and speculative mind is its being able to gain instruction from every quarter, even from whence it might be least expected.

The events recorded in reference to portrait painting, bring to my recollection one or two little anecdotes connected with the art; in particular, I remember once, in conversation with a friend, observing that I thought the highest merit and the greatest difficulty in painting portraits were to make them all appear to represent ladies or gentlemen.

"Undoubtedly," answered my friend, "it must indeed be very difficult for the painter to do it, as nature itself seems to have found it no easy business by having so very rarely made them such in appearance."

While on the subject of portrait, I may be allowed to observe, that it is a very desirable thing that the name should be written on the back of every portrait, signifying the person it represents.

I remember a letter from Mr. Locke to Collings, of which the following is an extract:

"Pray get Sir Godfrey to write on the back of Lady Marsham's picture, Lady Marsham; and on the back of mine John Locke, 1704. This he did to Mr. Molyneaux's: it is necessary to be done,

or else the pictures of private persons are lost in two or three generations; and so the picture loses its value, it not being known whom it was made to represent."

Mr. Locke died about a month after this letter was written.

Sir Joshua himself, indeed, never did this, nor even marked his own name, except in the instance of Mrs. Siddons's portrait as the Tragic Muse, when he wrote his name upon the hem of her garment.

With respect to that excellent portrait of our great tragic actress in which Reynolds has thus written his name on the skirt of the drapery, Mrs. Siddons told me herself that when she first saw the picture in its finished state, she went near to examine the pattern of this which appeared to be a curious classic embroidery, such being at that time much in fashion, and she then perceived it contained his name; when making the remark to Sir Joshua, who was present, he very politely said, "I could not lose the honour this opportunity offered to me for my name going down to posterity on the hem of your garment."

I remember to have heard General Paoli declare, that he could decide on the character and disposition of a man whose letter he had seen.

Notwithstanding this assertion may be carried something beyond what we may be inclined to allow, yet it is not destitute of truth to such as are nice discriminators of character.

If such is possible to be the case from merely seeing a letter, how much more information may we suppose to be drawn from a fine portrait; and in this particular excellence of character, the portraits of Reynolds most certainly surpass all other portraits existing in the world. This brings to my remembrance the anecdote told of Bernini, the famous sculptor, that Charles the First having a desire that Bernini should make his bust, sent over his portrait, painted by Vandyke, which exhibited three views of his face; and when the picture was presented to Bernini, who did not know whom it represented, he immediately exclaimed, "My God! whose portrait is this?—the man will not come to a timely end."

In the course of this year, Sir Joshua took another trip to Paris, from which he had scarcely returned when Mr. Bennet Langton renewed, in a very pressing manner, an invitation which he had given to him and Goldsmith to spend some part of the autumn with him and his lady, the Countess of Rothes, at their seat in Lincolnshire. With this obliging request, however, he was unable to comply, and Goldsmith, in a letter to Mr. Langton, declining the invitation on the part of both, says, "Reynolds is just returned from Paris, and finds himself now in the case of a truant, that must make up for his idle time by diligence; we have therefore agreed to postpone our journey till next summer."

On the 25th of July, in this year, an installation of the Knights of the Garter took place at Windsor Castle, a ceremony which had not been seen before for many years; and the King had expressed a desire that Sir Joshua might be present, which of course he readily complied with, but in some degree to his cost, for the show being a rare one, the multitude of persons assembled was immense, insomuch that in the crowd Sir Joshua lost his hat, and also a gold snuff-box.

In fact, at this period Sir Joshua may be said to have been at the zenith of his eminence, as we see him now employed in pourtraying the most illustrious personages in every different department, whilst his intimacy was sedulously sought after by all degrees of persons.

Much of the attention which even Goldsmith personally met with, was undoubtedly owing to the patronage of his admired friend; yet Sir Joshua used to say, that Goldsmith looked at, or considered, public notoriety, or fame, as one great parcel, to the whole of which he laid claim, and whoever partook of any part of it, whether dancer, singer, slight of hand man, or tumbler, deprived him of his right, and drew off the attention of the world from himself, and which he was striving to gain. Notwithstanding this, he lamented that whenever he entered into a mixed company, he struck a kind of awe on them, that deprived him of the enjoyment and freedom of society, and

which he then made it his endeavour to dispel by playing wanton and childish pranks in order to bring himself to the wished-for level.

It was very soon after my first arrival in London, where every thing appeared new and wonderful to me, that I expressed to Sir Joshua my impatient curiosity to see Dr. Goldsmith, and he promised I should do so on the first opportunity. Soon afterwards Goldsmith came to dine with him, and immediately on my entering the room, Sir Joshua, with a designed abruptness, said to me, "This is Dr. Goldsmith; pray why did you wish to see him?" I was much confused by the suddenness of the question, and answered, in my hurry, "Because he is a notable man." This, in one sense of the word, was so very contrary to the character and conduct of Goldsmith, that Sir Joshua burst into a hearty laugh, and said, that Goldsmith should, in future, always be called the notable man.

What I meant, however, to say was, that he was a man of note, or eminence.

He appeared to me to be very unaffected and good-natured; but he was totally ignorant of the art of painting, and this he often confessed with much gaiety.

It has been often said of Goldsmith, that he was ever desirous of being the object of attention in all companies where he was present; which the following anecdote may serve to prove.

On a summer's excursion to the continent he accompanied a lady and her two beautiful daughters into France and Flanders, and often expressed a little displeasure at perceiving that more attention was paid to them than to himself. On their entering a town, I think Antwerp, the populace surrounded the door of the hotel at which they alighted, and testified a desire to see those beautiful young women; and the ladies, willing to gratify them, came into a balcony at the front of the house, and Goldsmith with them: but perceiving that it was not himself who was the object of admiration, he presently withdrew, with evident signs of mortification, saying, as he went out, "I can assure you, ladies, it is not always with me as at present, for there are times and places where I am also the object of admiration!"

One day when Drs. Goldsmith and Johnson were at dinner with Sir Joshua, a poem, by a poet already alluded to, was presented to Sir Joshua, by his servant, from the author. Goldsmith immediately laid hold of it, and began to read it, and at every line cut almost through the paper with his finger nail, crying out, "What d——d nonsense is this?" for the Doctor could not bear to hear of another's fame; when Sir Joshua caught it out of his hands, saying, "No, no, don't do so; you shall not spoil my book neither;" seeing the weakness of Goldsmith, in thus exposing his envious humour.

Sir Joshua was always cautious to preserve an unblemished character, and careful not to make any man his enemy. I remember when he was told of some very indiscreet speech or action of Goldsmith, he quickly said, "What a fool he is thus to commit himself, when he has so much more cause to be careful of his reputation than I have of mine!" well recollecting that even the most trivial circumstance which tells against an eminent person, will be remembered as well as those in his favour; and that the world watch those who are distinguished for their abilities with a jealous eye.

Sir William Temple, in his Memoirs, relates a surprizing instance of sagacity in a macaw, one of the parrot genus of the largest kind, which occurred under his own observation. His relation is, indeed, a very wonderful one; but I am the more apt to give it credit, from being myself a witness of the following instance of apparent intellect in a bird of this species, and therefore can vouch for its truth: at the same time I hope to be excused for giving what I consider merely as a curious circumstance, and not to incur the accusation of vanity, in this instance at least, by making a weak endeavour to extol my own poor work, for very poor it was.

In the early part of the time that I passed with Sir Joshua as his scholar, I had, for the sake of practice, painted the portrait of one of the female

servants; but my performance had no other merit than that of being a strong likeness.

Sir Joshua had a large macaw, which he often introduced into his pictures, as may be seen from several prints. This bird was a great favourite, and was always kept in the dining parlour, where he became a nuisance to this same house-maid, whose department it was to clean the room after him; of course, they were not upon very good terms with each other.

The portrait, when finished was brought into the parlour, one day after dinner, to be shown to the family, that they might judge of the progress I had made. It was placed against a chair, while the macaw was in a distant part of the room, so that he did not immediately perceive the picture as he walked about on the floor; but when he turned round and saw the features of his enemy, he quickly spread his wings, and in great fury ran to it, and stretched himself up to bite at the face. Finding, however, that it did not move, he then bit at the hand, but perceiving it remain inanimate, he proceeded to examine the picture behind, and then, as if he had satisfied his curiosity, left it, and walked again to a distant part of the room; but whenever he turned about, and again saw the picture, he would, with the same action of rage, repeatedly attack it. The experiment was afterwards repeated, on various occasions, in the presence of Edmund Burke, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Gold-

smith, and most of Sir Joshua's friends, and never failed of success; and what made it still more remarkable was, that when the bird was tried by any other portrait, he took no notice of it whatever. Sir Joshua observed, that it was almost as extraordinary an instance as the old story of the bunch of grapes which deceived the birds, saying, "that birds and beasts were as good judges of pictures as men are."

On the 10th of December in this year, Sir Joshua delivered his fourth discourse, whose object was to give a view of those general ideas from whence arises that presiding principle which regulates the art of Painting, under the various heads of Invention, Expression, Colouring, and Drapery; after which, he took a view of the two separate styles, the Grand and the Ornamental, in Historical Composition, specifying the schools in which examples of each were to be found; to this he added a sketch of what he designated as the Composite style formed from local habits and customs, as well as on a partial observation of nature.

To enter into any thing like a specific detail of subjects so grand and so extensive, would be to copy the whole of this excellent discourse, which may, in fact, be compared to a cabinet of gems, as combining, within its circumscribed limits, every thing rich and rare; yet as my plan requires me to give a view of his opinions, as well as of his actions, through a life marked with the excellencies

both of the man and the painter, I trust I shall be indulged in embodying a few of his well-digested ideas into this part of my work, directed rather to the reader of taste than to the artist.

To form a judgement from his opening, one must see immediately the claim which Painting has upon the human mind; as he lays it down as a principle that the value and rank of every art is in proportion to the mental labour employed in it, or the mental pleasure produced by it; wherefore, as this principle is observed or neglected, the profession of the painter becomes either a liberal art, or merely a mechanical trade.

This principle he even considered as discriminative in the art itself, stating, that this exertion of mind, which is the only circumstance that truly ennobles the art, makes the great distinction between the Roman and Venetian schools.

With respect to Invention in painting, he did not apply that term merely to the invention of the subject, such being, for the most part, supplied by the historian or the poet: but still the choice must rest with the artist, for as no subject can be proper that is not generally interesting, so it ought to be either some eminent instance of heroic action, or of heroic suffering, of spirit or of fortitude, accompanied, either in the action or in the object, by something in which mankind are universally concerned, and which strikes powerfully upon the public sympathy.

Invention, then, he defined by observing, that whenever a story is related, every man forms a picture in his mind of the action and expression of the persons employed; and therefore what we call invention in a painter, is the power of representing this mental picture on canvas.

Minuteness of representation in the concomitant parts of a story, he thought unnecessary, any further than that they should not be unnatural, but judiciously contrived, so as not to strike the spectator more than they did himself at the first conception of his composition: for as the general idea constitutes real excellence, so all smaller things, however perfect in their way, must be sacrificed without mercy to the greater. To every kind of painting, he considered this rule as applicable; particularly in portraits, where the grace, and even the likeness consists more in taking the general air, than in observing the exact similitude of every feature.

In this part of his discourse he gave some hints by no means useless to every day connoisseurs, saying, that we know well enough, when we analyze a picture, the difficulty and subtilty with which an artist adjusts the back-ground, drapery and masses of light; we know that a considerable part of the grace and effect of his picture depends upon them: but then this art is so much concealed, even to a judicious eye, that no remains of any of these subordinate parts occur to the memory when the picture is not present.

As the great end of the art is to strike the imagination, so the painter is to make no ostentation of the means by which this is done; the spectator is only to feel the result in his bosom: an inferior artist, indeed, he acknowledged, is unwilling that any part of his industry should be lost upon the spectator; he takes as much pains to discover, as the greater artist does to conceal, the marks of his subordinate assiduity. Thus in works of the lower kind, every thing appears studied, and encumbered; it is all boastful art and open affectation. "The ignorant often part from such pictures with wonder in their mouths, and indifference in their hearts!"

In Expression, Sir Joshua considered the painter as having difficulties to contend with, very different from those of the poet or the historian: he has but one sentence to utter, but one moment to exhibit or embody; he cannot expatiate, or impress the mind with a progression of circumstances which excite veneration for the hero or the saint; he has no means of giving an idea of the dignity of the mind, but by that external appearance which grandeur of thought does generally, though not always, impress on the countenance, and by that correspondence of figure to sentiment and situation, which all men wish, but cannot command.

As the painter, therefore, cannot make his hero talk like a great man, he must make him look like one; for which reason, he ought to be well studied

in the analysis of those circumstances which constitute dignity of appearance in real life: but as in Invention, so likewise in Expression, care must be taken not to run into particularities, and those expressions alone ought to be given to the figures, which their respective situations generally produce.

As a principle, alike essential to the artist and the connoisseur, with respect to colouring, he observed, that to give a general air of grandeur at first view, all trifling or artful play of little lights, or an attention to a variety of tints, is to be avoided; and that a quietness and simplicity must reign over the whole of a picture, to which a breadth of uniform and simple colour will very much contribute.

In this branch of the art, he considered grandeur of effect to be produced in two different ways, which seem entirely opposed to each other; the one being the reducing of the colours to little more than chiaro scuro, as practised in the school of Bologna; the other, as in the Roman and Florentine schools, making the colours very distinct and forcible; whilst still, the presiding principle of both these manners is simplicity. For though the varied tints of the last mentioned schools have not that kind of harmony which is produced by other means, still they have that effect of grandeur which was intended. "Perhaps these distinct colours strike the mind more forcibly, from there

not being any great union between them; as martial music, which is intended to rouse the nobler passions, has its effect from its sudden and strongly marked transitions from one note to another, which that style of music requires; whilst in that which is intended to move the softer passions, the notes imperceptibly melt into one another."

In drapery, the great painter must, as he observed, adhere to the foregoing principles, carefully avoiding the debasement of his conceptions with minute discriminations of stuffs, which mark the inferior style; for "with him the cloathing is neither woollen nor linen, nor silk, satin, or velvet: it is drapery; it is nothing more." He acknowledged, indeed, that the art of disposing the foldings of the drapery, makes a very considerable part of the painter's study; but that to make it merely natural, is a mechanical operation, to which neither genius nor taste are required, whilst at the same time it demands the nicest judgement to dispose the drapery, so as that the folds shall have an easy communication, gracefully following each other, with such natural negligence as to look like the effect of chance, and at the same time shew the figure under it to the utmost advantage.

In adverting to the various schools, he considered the Roman, Florentine, and Bolognese, as the three great ones in the epic style, whilst the best of the French painters were to be considered as a colony from the former of the three: but the

Venetian, Flemish, and Dutch schools, he ranked beneath them, as all professing to depart from the great purposes of painting, and catching at applause by inferior qualities.

It will be readily understood from this, that he esteemed the ornamental style as of inferior consideration in comparison with the other; for as mere elegance was their principal object, particularly in the Venetian school, and as they seemed more willing to dazzle than to affect, so it could be no injury to them to suppose that their practice is useful only to its proper end; for as what may heighten the elegant may degrade the sublime: so the simplicity, nay, severity, of the great manner, is almost incompatible with this comparatively sensual style.

He then boldly laid it down as a maxim, that "such as suppose that the great style might happily be blended with the ornamental, that the simple, grave, and majestic dignity of Raffaelle could unite with the glow and bustle of a Paolo or Tintoret, are totally mistaken. The principles by which each is attained, are so contrary to each other, that they seem, in my opinion, incompatible, and as impossible to exist together, as that in the mind the most sublime ideas and the lowest sensuality should at the same time be united."

To mark the distinction, therefore, more strongly between the two principal styles, he added, that however contradictory it may be in geometry, it

is yet true in matters of taste, that many little things will never make a great one; that the sublime impresses the mind at once with one great idea, as at a single blow; whilst the elegant may be, and is, produced by repetition, by an accumulation of many minute circumstances.

After giving a professional and philosophical view of the various schools in these styles, Sir Joshua observed, that of those who have practised the composite style, and have succeeded in this perilous attempt, perhaps the foremost is Corregio; his style being founded on modern grace and elegance, to which is superadded something of the simplicity of the grand style; conspiring with which effect are breadth of light and colour, the general ideas of the drapery, and an uninterrupted flow of outline.

He then allowed, that, next to him, if not his equal, was Parmegiano, whom he described as dignifying the genteelness of modern effeminacy, by uniting it with the simplicity of the ancients, and the grandeur and severity of Michael Angelo. He confessed, indeed, that these two extraordinary men, by endeavouring to give the utmost degree of grace, have sometimes, perhaps, exceeded its boundaries, and have fallen into the most hateful of all hateful qualities—affectation.

Still did he adhere to the opinion, that the errors of genius are pardonable, at the same time that none, even of the more exalted painters, are free

from them; but then they have taught us, by the rectitude of their general practice, to correct their own affected or accidental deviation.

Sir Joshua then closed this elaborate and memorable discourse—a discourse so well adapted to the world at large, as well as to artists, by shewing, that works of genius and of science, if founded upon the general truths of nature, will live for ever; whilst those which depend upon the localities of time and place, or partial views of nature, and on the fluctuations of fashion, must inevitably fade away with those circumstances which have raised them from obscurity. "Present time and future must be considered as rivals, and he who solicits the one must expect to be discountenanced by the other."

Before I finish the year 1771, I may mention the sale of Jonathan Richardson's great and curious collection of prints and original drawings. These had been collected by his father and himself, and were to be sold by old Langford the auctioneer at his room under the Piazza, Covent Garden. I attended every evening of the sale, by Sir Joshua's desire, and much to my own gratification, as I had never before seen such excellent works. I purchased for Sir Joshua those lots which he had marked, consisting of a vast number of extraordinary fine drawings and prints by and from old masters; which greatly increased his valuable collection. One drawing in particular I

remember, a descent from the cross by Rembrant; in which were to be discovered sixteen alterations, or *pentimenti*, as the Italians term it, made by Rembrant, on bits of paper stuck upon the different parts of the drawing, and finished according to his second thoughts.

1772.

ÆTAT. 48.

THE fame and excellence of Sir Joshua Reynolds could not fail to draw on him the animadversions of those who aimed at the character of critics, and who, to preserve that character, judged it necessary to mix blame with their warmest praise, lest they should incur the name of flattery, and in this they were doubtless stimulated by the *good old rule*, that the first part of a knowing critic's duty is to discover blemishes. As a specimen of this, I shall extract a passage from a work published in this year, (1772,) under the title of "Letters concerning the present State of England," in which the writer has blended a strange mixture of praise and censure; and, what is most remarkable in it is, that the part of criticism which is the most difficult to execute with ability, that is the praise, is here given with much knowledge, discrimination, and truth; and the censure, on the contrary, is either unintelligible or untrue.

This passage is as follows: "Reynolds is original in his manner, and as bold and free in his style as any painter that Italy ever produced. Freedom is, indeed, his principal characteristic; to this he seems to sacrifice every other consideration: he has, however, two manners; in one he checks the extreme freedom of his dashing pencil, *works* his figures more into an expression, that may, in comparison with his other pieces, be called minute; in these the colouring is natural and good;—*(so far is a very just critique;)* but in his bolder, better works, the colours are graceful rather than chaste;—*(this is absolute nonsense;)* they have the ease of drawings, and mark how little attention was given by the artist to make them durable. In his attitudes he is generally full of grace, ease, and variety; he can throw his figures at will into the boldest variations, and ventures at some postures by which inferior painters would invariably damn their works—*(an excellent remark and true).* His learning in his art is great—*(very just)*—and this has made him slight colours too much on comparison with drawing; the latter alone is certainly superior to the former alone;--*(exactly the reverse is the truth;)* —but the true beauty of fine colouring is an essential, and should never be neglected. *(Sir Joshua's constant aim was colour.)* In a word this painter is more a man of genius than an agreeable artist;—*(he was both in an eminent degree;)*

—there is more fire than nature in his works; more enegy than softness;—*(no painter that ever lived had more softness;)*—more ease than beauty; such as will rather awaken knowledge than kindle pleasure"—*(this is false)*.

In contradistinction to the unfounded criticisms on Reynolds's style of painting, already given as extracted from "Letters from England," I trust that Sir Joshua's own remarks on the subject of criticisms on the art will not here be misplaced.

"When a picture by a gaudy copier, done in a false and bad taste, is shewn to some pretended connoisseurs, who may have been used to see good pictures, they will immediately, and properly, disapprove of it: not because it is in reality in a bad taste, but because it has a different appearance from those pictures which have been shewn to them as the best; for in other matters it will be found that their taste is utterly vulgar, false, and depraved; whilst he who has formed to himself a really good taste* will be uniform throughout in his judgement.

"Out of the great number of critics in this metropolis, who all pretend to knowledge in pictures, the greater part must be mere pretenders only. Taste does not come by chance: it is a long and laborious task to acquire it; the mind,

* What we call *Taste* is a kind of *extempore* judgement; it is a settled habit of distinguishing, without staying to attend to rules, or ratiocination, and arises from long use and experience.

like a pendulum, must waver this way and that way, before it fixes upon the centre."

Again, speaking of critics, he says—

"We find the noblest and boldest passages to have been particularly pitched upon for impertinent criticism. These are the divine boldnesses which, in their very nature, provoke ignorance and short-sightedness to shew themselves; and whoever is capable of attaining the greatest height, knows for certain he shall be attacked by such as cannot reach it."

After this judgement of Sir Joshua's upon critics and criticism on the art, I shall venture to give some opinions of my own on the subject, particularly as they are not in opposition to those recorded.

It has often struck me as a matter of wonder, why we should so frequently meet with persons who are good judges of literature, yet so seldom with those who are competent judges of the graphic arts: and the only way I know to account for this seeming paradox is, to conclude, that the language of the art, as it has been termed, and expressed by the pencil, is, to the bulk of the world, obscure, or at least far from being familiar to them: yet all conceive themselves qualified to be critics on paintings. As to those numerous connoisseurs in art, whose essays we commonly meet with in the inferior publications, such as daily newspapers, &c., &c., it is both curious and diverting to ob-

serve the very odd remarks which they make on the arts, from not having sufficiently studied them. This incompetency to the undertaking gives such an air of childish innocence to their prattle, that, whilst it has no bad motive—no disguised malice at the bottom, it seems a pity to check it; and the severest punishment I would inflict upon them is, that they should be enabled to view their own criticisms with an artist's conception, which would be the most effectual means of putting a stop to such inanity; for many of those whose criticisms on pictures make them appear to be so very silly in the eyes of artists, are frequently men of very good understanding, and show much judgement in many other matters which come within the sphere of their study, and they would feel severely the contemptible figure they make in uttering opinions frequently so weak, that boys in the schools of art would scorn, and laugh at them: and although these critics conceal their names, and are themselves hid in obscurity, yet, as no one can bear to appear contemptible in his own eyes, surely a man can find no pleasure in its being proved to him that he has played the fool. This description alludes to the attempts at criticism by the innocent and ignorant; but we have to lament, that, but too often, ephemeral criticism is made the instrument of some base and partial purpose of interest. At times it proceeds from some ill-starred wight, who pines with envy at

the sight of those powers which he cannot attain. He fain would blast that fruit which he cannot gather. Every human work, besides its excellencies, does most commonly contain a large proportion of defects; and to point out those defects is too often the sole gratification which feeds the vanity of the superficially learned; who imagine that they are exalted in the same proportion as they contribute to the degradation of every pretender to talents. It also, in some degree, soothes the feelings of the unsuccessful and malignant, by persuading them that they have still the power of making their more fortunate competitors, at least for a time, as uncomfortable as themselves: they likewise feel at the moment as if they were really superior to the work over which they seem to triumph—which acts as a cordial to their self-opinion—as an opiate to tortured pride. But it should be recollected, that the critic, in reviewing the object of his criticism, has the advantage of the inventor's experience to assist him, and, thus prepared, finds it not difficult to point out how the work might have been done better; when, perhaps, from his own resources alone, he might not have been able to conceive at first how the work could have been done at all.

Criticism, when poured out by the weak or vulgar, has, in some cases, very bad effects. It has a tendency to intimidate the modest and inexperienced spirit, who dreads the clamour of pre-

sumptuous ignorance usurping an office, and peremptorily pretending to set rules for those powers which it cannot comprehend; and it overawes that spirit of exertion which cannot operate with full effect, unless it be perfectly free from fear of controul. To 'snatch a grace beyond the rules of art' is only to be hoped for by those who defy the puny critic and his censures;—the steed which attempts a leap beyond its usual course should fear no check from the rein, as it would inevitably cause both the horse and his rider to fall.

Thus we see that criticism has the fatal tendency to paralyze those laudable and energetic efforts to produce works, without which criticism could not exist: criticism is the child that devours its own parent!

The only good that possibly can accrue from the observations of those obtrusive minor critics on works of living artists (for as to the dead, there is always justice administered to those against whom no evil passions operate) is, that sometimes, by chance, they may throw out a useful hint; and also, that the noise they make serves in the place of an advertisement. But if what they have to say is not the truth, the little hurt falls only on themselves; yet, if truth is on their side, they have an indubitable right to speak it. Notwithstanding, however, that at times their ignorance, or their pertness, is displeasing, they still should be

viewed with complacency. In these observations, indeed, it is but fair to state, that I allude solely to those who, being unable to make a figure equal to their ambition, in a higher department, and yet unwilling to be set wholly aside, consent to practise the virtue of humility, patiently join the retinue of those who are more fortunate than themselves, and are to be considered as proper appendages to eminence, or in the capacity of train-bearers: and although the office they appear in is to hold up to public view that superfluous part of the garment of merit which is nearest to the dust, yet it still adds dignity even to genius: whilst *real criticism*, like a tender parent, improves as it admonishes;—the justice of its award softening even the severity of its censure. But from the depressed critic (who, I apprehend, is frequently more the object of pity than of anger) much commendation ought not to be expected or required; no more than song and melody might have been looked for, in their heaviness, from the captive Jews in Babylon.

In the course of this year, Sir Joshua painted a particularly fine picture, especially in point of expression, of Resignation, and dedicated the print taken from it to Dr. Goldsmith, with some lines under it quoted from his poem of the Deserted Village. This seems to have been done by Sir Joshua as a return of the compliment to Goldsmith, who had dedicated the poem to him: and

it drew the following poetical tribute from the talents of Dr. Willis, which, as it relates to those circumstances attending the picture, together with some tolerable criticism as well as praise, I shall insert.

" 'Optimum ducem naturam sequimur,
————Quod sit meritus ferat.'

" Hail Painting! sweet companion of the Nine,
For thee shall Taste, the Rose, and Myrtle twine.
Amazing art! whose magic touch can throw
O'er canvas Nature's animated glow!
Bid heroes' eyes glare with heroic fire,
And love's soft victims languish with desire.
Great Nature's shade! thy mimic power can raise
The varying passions, like the poet's lays.
No more in search of science let us stray
Where Maro sung, and Cæsar bore the sway:
Britain can cherish arts; her meadows yield
As pure an air as does the Appian field;
Our monarch reigns, the noblest of his kind,
Art's great restorer—ne'er to merit blind:
For him shall Painting lasting trophies raise,
Historic pencils tell his warlike praise;
For him shall Poêsy, fir'd with Pindar's flame,
To after ages consecrate his fame:
For him, with ardour, ev'ry art shall join;
With Alfred's name, rever'd, his blooming laurels twine.
'Tis thine, Oh Reynolds! to possess the art,
By speaking canvas, to affect the heart;
See! *Resignation* settled on that eye;
Nature can only with thy pencil vie!
Hail, Resignation source of true repose,
Thou best composer of all human woes:
Oh come, sweet friend! thy balmy joys prepare:
My genius droops, relax'd by constant care.

Thy moral picture checks my mournful strain,
Some power unseen forbids me to complain;
Tells me, kind Hope dawns sweet from yonder gloom,
On years to come awaits a happier doom.
Cheer'd with the thought, I bend to Heav'n's high will;
Thy moral picture shall support me still.
Where genius shines, its pleasing power I feel,
Nor strive my admiration to conceal.
Truth guides my pen; I scorn the treach'rous wiles
Of servile flattery, affected smiles:
Truth needs no dress to make her beauty shine,
So poets paint her naked and divine;
And genuine Taste may pleasure still acquire,
Whilst THOU *canst paint*, and *Goldsmith tune the Lyre!*

The subject of the foregoing lines calls to my remembrance a fragment of a little poem composed by Miss F. Reynolds, youngest surviving sister of Sir Joshua, which surely are possessed of a simplicity and piety highly creditable to her heart, as she in them shews that religion is the only true source of resignation under the evils of this world.

"Youth's flow'ry paths I now no more shall tread,
But those of age, with horrors overspread:
Where the lorn wanderers, melancholy, slow,
Sad spectres, monuments of woe!
Ruins of life! no semblance left by time,
No trace remaining of their manhood's prime,
Oppress'd with gloom, to cares and fears a prey,
Lonely, forlorn, they linger through the day,
Pursuing nought, save only to obtain
A little space the dregs of life to drain;
Tenacious still of what they ne'er enjoy,
Wishing to rest, and yet afraid to die!
No cheerful ray illumes the dusky vale,
No balmy fragrance floating in the gale,

But dark malignant clouds, and noxious dew,
Hang on the cypress sad, and mournful yew;
In sable weeds, which flow with solemn sweep,
The weeping willow seems indeed to weep.
From this sad prospect of my future days,
Bereft of all that nature form'd to please,
Involuntary oft I turn mine eye,
Where youth, and hope, and sweet affections lie;
Where liberal Nature in profusion pours
Rich herbage, balmy springs, and fragrant flow'rs:
The landscape smiles around in beauty gay,
And cheers the sense with ev'ry charm of May.
Alas! not me to cheer—invidious Time
Allows me not to taste of Nature's prime;
Holds up his glass, and bids me mark how low,
How black the sand, that yet remains to flow.
Methought a veil, of lucid rays compos'd,
Disparting wide, an heav'nly form disclos'd;
And as the ground her beauteous foot imprest,
Hope's cheerful ray seem'd kindling in my breast.
With winning sweetness, yet majestic air,
"I come," she cried, "thy gloomy soul to cheer;
To guide thy erring will, thy passions sooth,
And make the rugged paths of nature smooth,
That vale below that fills thy soul with dread,
And seems with gloom and horrors overspread,
Owes its appearance to thy troubled mind,
Deaf to the voice of truth—to reason blind:
'Tis I alone that can the film remove,
That dims thy sight, and make yon gloomy grove
Smile with immortal fruits, and bloom with flow'rs
Fairer than poets feign of Paphian bow'rs.
I am RELIGION, whose all-powerful ray
Beams on the darken'd mind celestial day;—
Points out the path that leads to pure delight;
And proves this truth—*Whatever is is right!*"

The eminence of Sir Joshua was now so high, that the quantity of complimentary verses which

were addressed to him would fill a volume, and would be tedious to repeat; but the following lines I cannot omit, as I think them an excellent instance of the mock heroic, though intended as very serious, and very exquisite. Surely the Genius of Affectation is never so busy, nor triumphs half so much, as when he attends at the elbow of his favourite poets, and makes them speak thus:—

> "Feel ye
> What Reynolds felt, when first the Vatican
> Unbarr'd her gates, and to his raptur'd eye
> Gave all the god-like energy that flow'd
> From Michael's pencil."——

The affectation in these lines appears still more gross when we recur to the grand simplicity of the character of him to whom they allude, or compare them with those which were last recited.

In the discourse delivered this year, (1772,) on the 10th of December, Sir Joshua concluded his series of remarks begun in one of the former years.

His grand object in this display was to incite the young students to consider the attainment of the higher excellencies of the art as an acquisition of the first importance, though not to the total exclusion of a search after the subordinate qualifications; which, however, he considered as but of minor consequence: at the same time warning his hearers, that caution and circumspection were not to be lost sight of in the eagerness of pursuit.

On this part of his subject he particularly noted, that judgement was necessary not only in the acquisition of these excellencies, but also in their application: for though many would bear to be united, and some even be improved from the union; yet still there were others which, though perfect in themselves, were of a nature so discordant with their companions, that nothing but incongruity could be produced by their mutual introduction.

Here too his meaning was fully exemplified by his illustrations: for, laying it down as a truth that the expression of *passion* was not in unison with *perfect beauty*, all the passions producing some degree of distortion and deformity, even in the most beautiful countenances, so those that attempted to preserve beauty, where strong passions ought to be considered as operating powerfully upon the personages represented, must inevitably sacrifice a superior excellence, as *Guido* has done in many instances, particularly in his Judith, the daughter of Herodias, Andromeda, nay, even in some of the mothers' countenances in the Slaughter of the Innocents, which have, thus, little more expression than he has given to his "Venus attired by the Graces."

One principle which he had here in view was to guard the artist against the effects of that false criticism which so often marks the writings of men who are not of the profession; who being unable to find out the real beauties of a performance, merely

find out that which they are before-hand resolved to discover; and therefore not only praise excellencies which cannot with propriety exist together, but even dilate upon the expression of mixed passions, a thing which his accurate knowledge of the human countenance and human heart well knew to be a thing impossible.

He even proved his position from the theory and practice of the ancients, who always described their Jupiter as possessed in the aggregate of all those great qualities which were separately enjoyed by subordinate deities; but yet, when they called in the aid of art to represent him, they confined his character to that of majesty alone, without attempting to delineate the others.

At this part of his discourse he took the opportunity of shewing how much the great Pliny himself resembled some of our modern connoisseurs, when, with something like the cant of modern criticism, he stated that the spectator might discover no less than three different and distinct characters in a statue of Paris, executed by the famous sculptor Euphranor, and in which were to be seen the dignity of a judge of the goddesses, the lover of Helen, and the conqueror of Achilles; adding, "A statue in which you endeavour to unite stately dignity, youthful elegance, and stern valour, must surely possess none of those to any great degree." After this he adds, what will be best expressed in his own words: "I do not discourage the younger

students from the noble attempt of uniting all the excellencies of art, but to make them aware, that, besides the difficulties which attend every arduous attempt, there is a peculiar difficulty in the choice of the excellencies which ought to be united. I wish you to attend to this, that you may try yourselves, whenever you are capable of that trial, what you can, and what you cannot do; and that, instead of dissipating your natural faculties over the immense field of possible excellence, you may choose some particular walk in which you may exercise all your powers; in order each of you to be the first in his way."

In exemplification of the judicious choice of excellence, he observed, that Lodovico Caracci, in particular, was well acquainted with the works both of Corregio and of the Venetian painters, and also knew the principles by which they produced those pleasing effects which, at first glance, prepossess us so much in their favour; but then he stated, that he took only as much from each as would embellish, but not overpower, that manly strength and energy of style which form his peculiar character.

In speaking of *Styles* he also shewed, that although the *Ornamental* cannot, with propriety, be considered as a principal, it is still expedient to be called in to soften the harshness and mitigate the severity of the great style, which latter being that of the greatest masters, Michael Angelo, and Raf-

faelle, is principally to be found in fresco paintings, a mode of execution which excludes attention to minute elegancies.

The concluding part of this discourse may be considered as the *Jewel of Connoisseurs;* for in it they will find a plain, simple, yet delicate investigation of the merits of those two great masters, as well as of Salvator Rosa, Carlo Maratti, Poussin, Rubens, &c., an investigation founded on the dictates of taste, genius, and sound sense, and the more particularly valuable from being cleared of all the tinsel of terms, which only serve to give a glare to ignorance.

1773.

ÆTAT. 49.

The intimate friendship between Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua still existed in its full force; yet so flattering were the compliments which Johnson properly chose to pay to Mrs. Thrale, who sincerely esteemed him, that we find him writing to her, in the month of February, 1773, after a slight illness, for her approbation of his visiting at his friend's house: he says, "I have an invitation to dine at Sir Joshua Reynolds's on Tuesday; may I accept it? I have undertaken to beg from you the favour of lending Miss Reynolds, Newton on the Prophecies, &c." This, however, was, probably, mere matter of compliment, or to consult her on its safety in respect to his returning health;

for Sir Joshua's house and table were always open to his friends, with invitation or without, and as freely made use of.

To Goldsmith, in particular, he was always attentive; a man of whom it has been, not unaptly, said, that his carelessness of conduct, and frivolity of manners, obscured the goodness of his heart. Mr. Cumberland, in his own Memoirs, has a passage peculiarly illustrative of this, where he says, that "Sir Joshua Reynolds was very good to him, and would have drilled him into better trim and order for society, if he would have been amenable; for Reynolds was a perfect gentleman, had good sense, great propriety, with all the social attributes, and all the graces of hospitality, equal to any man. He well knew how to appreciate men of talents, and how near akin the Muse of Poetry was to that Art of which he was so eminent a master. From Goldsmith he caught the subject of his famous Ugolino; what aids he got from others, if he got any, were worthily bestowed, and happily applied."

Mr. Cumberland, however, is, perhaps, rather inaccurate in his assertion respecting the painting of "Ugolino," which was finished in this year, (1773,) and begun, not long before, as an historical subject.

The fact is, that this painting may be said to have been produced as an historical picture by an accident: for the head of the Count had been painted previous to the year 1771, and finished on

what we painters call "a half length canvas," and was, in point of expression, exactly as it now stands, but without any intention, on the part of Sir Joshua, of making it the subject of an historical composition, or having the story of Count Ugolino in his thoughts. Being exposed in the picture gallery, along with his other works, it was seen, either by Mr. Edmund Burke, or Dr. Goldsmith, I am not certain which, who immediately exclaimed, that it struck him as being the precise person, countenance, and expression of the Count Ugolino, as described by Dante in his "Inferno."

This affecting description is given in the thirty-third Canto of the first part of his Comedia, where, in his supposed passage through hell, he introduces Ugolino gnawing the head of his treacherous and cruel enemy, the Archbishop Ruggiero, and then telling his own sad story on the appearance of the poet.

The historical facts are simply these, that in the latter end of the thirteenth century there were great intestine divisions, in the city and state of Pisa in Italy, for the sovereignty; divisions which gave rise to the well known contests of the Guelphs and Ghibellines. The former of these consisted of two parties, at the head of which were Visconti and Ugolino: whilst the Archbishop Ruggiero led the third.

Between this latter and Ugolino a compromise took place, by which means Visconti and his par-

tizans were driven out; when Ruggiero, finding the Guelph faction considerably weakened, immediately plotted against his quondam friend, already elected sovereign. The mob being excited by the crafty priest against their new prince, the unfortunate Ugolino was overpowered, and he and his two sons, together with two grandsons, were then conveyed to the city prison, where they remained some months, until the Pisans being excommunicated by the Pope, they became so enraged, that they determined to revenge themselves on the unhappy prisoners; and having accordingly strongly secured and barricadoed the doors of the dungeon, they threw the keys of the prison into the river Arno, so that Ugolino and his unhappy offspring perished.

Thus far the historian—when the imagination of the poet undertook to fill up the awful hiatus between the sealing of their doom and the last moment of expiring nature: and of the poet's powers I am happy to be able to give an illustration, in the following beautiful translation by my friend Mr. Nathaniel Howard, of Plymouth, Devon, who is an ornament to his country:

> "La Bocca s'allevò dal fiero pasto
> Quel peccator," &c.

> "The sinner pausing from his grim repast
> Wip'd in the miscreant's hair his gory jaws,
> 'My desperate woe, obedient to thy will,
> I now relate,' he answer'd; 'tho' with pain

Remembrance wring my heart. For if my tale
Should to this traitor, whom I gnaw, produce
The fruit of infamy, tho' tears gush forth,
Yet will I speak.—I know not whence thou art,
Or what commission brings thee to this gulf,
But speech, in truth, bespeaks thee Tuscan born.
Know, Ugolino and that prelate base,
Ruggiero, meet thy presence; mark our forms.
I need not mention that his evil mind
First wrong'd my confidence, then caused my death;
But what lies undivulg'd shall now be heard,
The cruel manner of my lingering doom:
Then shalt thou learn the colour of his guilt.
Within the iron dungeon, which still bears
The name of "Famine" since my dreadful death,
And still, where others pine, there thro' the grate
Shone many a moon; and oft my feverish dreams
Unveil'd the future to my mental view.
This priest, I dreamt, was leader of the chase;—
Swift to the Julian mountain, with his whelps,
Hurried the wolf: with blood-hounds gaunt and keen—
Lanfranchi and Sismondi, and the chief
Gualundi follow'd. Soon the course was spent;
The victim and his infant race grew faint:
When on them sprang, I thought, the savage pack,
And with their tusks transpierc'd their panting sides.
This wak'd me ere the dawn; when, in their sleep,
I heard my children groan and call for bread——
Oh cruel! should no pity touch thy soul
To think how much a father's heart presag'd?—
If now thou shed'st no tears, what have thy eyes
Been us'd to weep at?——Now my boys awoke:
The hour arriv'd, when each expected food,
As wonted, would be brought him;—but his heart
Mistrusted, when each thought upon his dream.
And I, O horrible! that instant heard
The dungeon doors, below, more firmly lock'd:
In desp'rate silence on my sons I gaz'd—
I could not weep—My heart was turn'd to stone.

The little victims wept; and one began,
My dear Anselmo: '*Father! why that look?*—
'*What ails my father?*'—Ah! I could not weep,
Nor answer all that day, nor yet the night,
'Till on the world another morn arose.
As faintly thro' our doleful prison gleam'd
The trem'lous ray, so I could view again
Each face, on which my features were imprest;—
Both hands I gnaw'd in agony and rage.
Sweet innocents! they thought me hunger-stung,
And, rising on a sudden, all exclaim'd,
'Father! our anguish would be less severe
'If thou would'st feed on us. This fleshly vest
'Thou did'st bestow, now take it back again.'—
I check'd my inward nature, lest my groans
Should aggravate their anguish. *All were mute*
That bitter day, and all the morrow. Earth!
Why did'st thou not, obdurate earth! dispart?
The fourth sad morning came, when at my feet
My Gaddo fell extended: 'Help!' he cried,
'*Can'st thou not help me, father?*'—and expired.
So wither'd, as thou see'st me; one by one,
I saw my children, ere the sixth noon die:
And, seiz'd with sudden blindness, on my knees
I grop'd among them, calling each by name
For three days after they were dead.—At last,
Famine and death clos'd up the scene of woe.'
"So having said, with dark, distorted eyes,
He on the wretched skull infix'd his teeth,
And, like a mastiff, gnaw'd the solid bone."

After this exquisite detail by the poet, the subject was taken up by the sculptor, and Richardson, in his "Science of a Connoisseur," relates that Michael Angelo Buonarotti composed a bas-relief of the count sitting with his four children, one of which lay dead at his feet: over their heads

was a figure to represent Famine, and beneath them another, personifying the river Arno, on whose banks the tragedy was acted.

The whole subject is well handled by Richardson, the painter, and may be read with pleasure, as relative to the picture, although written long before the idea started by Burke was adopted by Sir Joshua, who immediately had his canvas enlarged, in order that he might be enabled to add the other figures, and to complete his painting of the impressive description of the Italian poet.

The picture, when finished, was bought by the late Duke of Dorset for four hundred guineas; and it has since been noticed by Dr. Joseph Warton, who, in his Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, introduces the story in exemplification of some pathetic passages in that writer; and then adds—"Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose mind is stored with great and exalted ideas, has lately shown, by a picture on this subject, how qualified he is to preside at a Royal Academy, and that he has talents that ought not to be confined to portrait painting."

The following lines were made as descriptive of the surprise and astonishment of Omiah, a native of Otaheite, when he was introduced to see the painting of Count Ugolino in Sir Joshua Reynolds's gallery.

"But ah! what scene now strikes with wild affright?
What heart-felt horrors pain my aching sight!—

Say, rev'rend Sire, whence all this mis'ry?—speak?
Why sits pale hunger preying on thy cheek?
Why on thy brow that dark despondent gloom?—
What hand, accurst, has wrought thy barb'rous doom?
Say, whence these piteous babes in early breath
The fated prey of unrelenting death?——
He hears me not; but, fix'd in silent grief,
The tortur'd soul is lost to all relief!
Speak, hoary wretch! Oh make these mis'ries known—
Nor, sunk in woe, be thus transform'd to stone!
Thou shalt not die—to nature this I owe:
Sweet mercy lives,—and lives the friend of woe!
I fly to free them——' when, with strange surprize,
His honest fingers contradict his eyes:
With wonder struck, he doubts which sense is true;
Returns to touch, and is convinc'd anew.
'Twas fiction all—illusion and deceit;
Magic and Reynolds wrought the wond'rous cheat:
His mimic pencil nature's fire has caught,
And paints at once the feature and the thought."

Any anecdotes of Reynolds's paintings must be acceptable; in addition, therefore, to the circumstances connected with the "Ugolino," I may here record, that the picture of "the Children in the Wood," by Sir Joshua, may be said also to have been produced by an accident, at least as an historical composition: for when the Beggar Infant, who was sitting to him for some other picture, during the sitting fell asleep, Reynolds was so pleased with the innocence of the object, that he would not disturb its repose to go on with the picture on which he was engaged, but took up a fresh canvas, and quickly painted the child's head as it lay before it moved; and as the

infant altered its position, still in sleep, he sketched another view of its head on the same canvas. He afterwards finished a back ground of a woody scenery, and by adding the robin red-breast converted it into the subject of the Children in the Wood.*

Some time after this, his pencil gave to the world another historical subject of great celebrity, the Infant Jupiter, now the property of the Duke of Rutland.†

When Goldsmith's comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer," was to be brought out on the stage, on the 15th of March in this year, he was at a loss what name to give it, till the very last moment, and then, in great haste, called it "She Stoops to Conquer, or the Mistakes of a Night." Sir Joshua, who disliked this name for a play, offered a much better to him, saying, "You ought to call it the Belle's Stratagem, and if you do not I will damn it." However, Goldsmith chose to

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* The mother of the beggar infant at one time had nearly given a finale to Sir Joshua's studies from this subject, whilst he was employed in painting from it, by carelessly letting the child fall over her arm on the floor, which, as she sat at the time in a chair raised some height above it, made the fall very considerable; but, by great good fortune, the child received no material injury from the accident.

† It may not be undeserving of notice, that there is a duplicate of the Infant Jupiter (possessed by the Duke of Rutland;) as I well remember having prepared a copy for Sir Joshua in a groundwork on black and white.

name it himself, as above; and Mrs. Cowley has since given that name to one of her comedies.

Goldsmith was in great anxiety about its success: he was much distressed in his finances at the time, and all his hopes hung on the event; and at the dinner preceding the representation of his play, his mouth became so parched and dry, from the agitation of his mind, that he was unable to swallow a single mouthful. The actors themselves had great doubts of its success: but, contrary to their expectations, the play was received with great applause; Sir Joshua and a large party of friends going for the purpose of supporting it if necessary. The dinner party, which took place at the Shakspeare, is humourously described by Cumberland. Dr. Johnson took the head of the table, and there were present the Burkes, Caleb Whiteford, Major Mills, &c., &c.*

When the play was in preparation at the theatre, Miss Reynolds, with a few other ladies, her friends, accompanied by Goldsmith, went one morning to the house to attend its rehearsal. Mr. Shuter afterwards performed a principal character in this play, in which he displayed infinite spirit;

* I recollect that Dr. Goldsmith gave me an order soon after this, with which I went to see this comedy; and the next time I saw him, he inquired of me what my opinion was of it. I told him that I would not presume to be a judge of its merits; he asked, "Did it make you laugh?" I answered, "Exceedingly." "Then," said the Doctor, "that is all I require."

yet when he appeared before this small and select audience, he betrayed the strongest marks of shyness, even to bashfulness: which proves that the smallest novelty in situation, or deviation from accustomed habits, is sufficient to discompose the veteran professor; for when Shuter appeared before a crowded house, he always felt himself perfectly easy.*

It was about this period that Goldsmith, ever fearful of being thought insignificant, was much offended with Garrick, who he conceived had treated him on some occasions with great hauteur. In relating the matter to Sir Joshua, he said he could not suffer such airs of superiority from one who was only a poor player; but Sir Joshua replied, "No, no, don't say that; he is no *poor* player surely."

Speaking to Sir Joshua concerning Goldsmith, I asked his opinion of him as a poet, and if he did

* I remember another similar instance, which a late illustrious General told me of himself; that being at some distance from London with his regiment, the King, Queen, and several others of the Royal Family, together with Mr. Pitt, and many ministers of state as well as courtiers, came to see the review, which was to take place that morning, he commanding as the General: when, being in the presence of personages so conspicuously high, either for rank or talents, he confessed that he felt, while conversing with them, an aukward shyness; but immediately on mounting his horse, and manœuvring at the head of his troops, he became as perfectly unembarrassed as if he was at home; and could not help laughing to himself, when he saw what droll figures some of the courtiers made, mounted on chargers.

not consider him as very excellent: his answer was, that Goldsmith, as a poet, he believed, was about the degree of Addison.

Goldsmith, it is well known, was of an imprudent and careless disposition, insomuch, that I have heard Sir Joshua remark of him, in times of his greatest distress, he was often obliged to supplicate a friend for the loan of ten pounds for his immediate relief; yet, if by accident a distressed petitioner told him a piteous tale, nay if a subscription for any folly was proposed to him, he, without any thought of his own poverty, would, with an air of generosity, freely bestow on the person, who solicited for it, the very loan he had himself but just before obtained.

One day Dr. Johnson and Dr. Goldsmith meeting at Sir Joshua Reynolds's table, the conversation turned on the merits of that well known tragedy, Otway's Venice Preserved, which Goldsmith highly extolled, asserting, that of all tragedies it was the one nearest in excellence to Shakspeare; when Johnson, in his peremptory manner, contradicted him, and pronounced that there were not forty good lines to be found in the whole play; adding, "Pooh! what stuff are these lines:—'What feminine tales hast thou been listening to, of unaired shirts, catarrhs, and tooth-ach got by thin soled shoes?'"

"True," replied Goldsmith, "to be sure that is very like Shakspeare."

Sir Joshua used to say, that he thought any man of tolerable capacity might write a tragedy, such as an audience would receive from the stage without objection; but that it required a real genius for humour, together with considerable taste, to write a comedy. The remark has been made by Sorbiere, an eminent French physician, who gives ample reasons for this opinion."*

* "More tragedies than comedies are produced. Young men first make an attempt at tragedy; not being able, for want of knowledge and experience, to attempt any other kind of writing. Their hero of the tragedy is, for the most part, a fictitious character, and Phœbus and the Muses are invoked to fit him out for appearing. On the contrary, the characters of a comedy are such as we meet with daily in the streets at every turn; and we have only to transcribe their words and actions. It is true, that those we esteem the most excellent painters are not frequently the best copyists; and that good historians are not always skilful in drawing characters. But, perhaps, this is a defect in them; and, to speak fairly, the painter who copies nature exactly, and with art, is surely as deserving of our praise as he who cannot paint after nature, but looks for an original in his caprice. It appears that comedy is the most difficult of dramatic works: as the poet imitates characters which are under the observation of all, and whose opinions must confirm the likeness of the portraiture. The style of comedy is less arduous than that of tragedy: as there is less art in running very fast, and skipping up and down, than in a regular march or a graceful dance. Yet it is not so difficult to soar in heroic verse as to represent common life; which requires a steady and vigorous pencil."

Samuel Sorbiere, an eminent physician in Paris, in the time of Louis XIV, and patronized by Cardinal Mazarin, was born in the year 1610, and died in 1670.

Sir Joshua thought that species of the drama, called tragicomedy, was natural, because similar to the combinations of events, which are frequently met with in real life.

When the much praised tragedy of Braganza was brought out on the stage at Drury Lane Theatre, Sir Joshua went to the first representation, and sat in the orchestra, a place he always preferred on account of his difficulty of hearing; he was accompanied by Mr. Garrick. The performance of Mrs. Yates, as Duchess of Braganza, gave universal satisfaction, and was received with the greatest applause. I heard Sir Joshua say, that when he turned to see how Garrick felt on the occasion he perceived his eyes suffused with tears.

Mr. Edmund Burke had great objection to that scene in the tragedy, in which poison is intended to be given infused in the holy wafer, he seemed to conceive it to be a new invention, saying such dreadful modes of wickedness ought not to have been divulged to the world. But surely Mr. Burke must have known that it had been practised before the drama of Braganza was ever thought of, and that it has been also recorded in history.

The following elegant letter to Sir Joshua, as it relates to one of his most distinguished performances, together with his answer, in which that work is described, certainly cannot be unacceptable to the reader.

"To Sir Joshua Reynolds.

"DEAR SIR JOSHUA,

"This letter will be delivered to you by Miss ———, who intends to sit to you with her two sisters, to compose a picture, of which I am

to have the honour of being the possessor. I wish to have their portraits together at full length, representing some emblematical or historical subject; the idea of which, and the attitudes which will best suit their forms, cannot be so well imagined as by one who has so eminently distinguished himself by his genius and poetic invention. Give me leave to mention to you (notwithstanding I am well assured you want no incitement to make your works complete,) that besides the advantage you will have in the superiority of the beauty and elegance of those subjects which no doubt will of themselves convey a degree of instruction, you will, I hope, find that these young ladies, from their high opinion of your powers, will not spare their time, in order to render this picture in every particular a most superior production. I shall add the honour you will acquire in conveying to posterity the resemblances of three sisters so distinguished for different species of beauty; and what I flatter myself will not be the smallest reason for particular attention to this work, the great obligation you will confer on me in making it perfect.

"I am with great esteem,

"Dear Sir Joshua,

"Your very sincere friend and humble servant.

"*Dublin, May 27th*, 1773.

Sir Joshua after having begun this capital picture, proposed to him in the foregoing letter, and

having proceeded so far in it as to finish the three portrait heads, and sketch the outline of the composition, was induced to take a trip to Portsmouth with a party of friends on the occasion of the King's reviewing the navy at that port; and afterwards went to Oxford, as will be noticed again. On his return he wrote the following answer to the above letter.

"SIR,

"I intended long ago to have returned you thanks for the agreeable employment in which you have engaged me, and likewise for the very obliging manner in which this favour was conferred; but immediately after the heads were finished, I was enticed away to Portsmouth, and from thence to Oxford, from whence I am but just returned; so that this is the first quiet minute I have had for this month past; though it is a little delayed by these holidays, it will not, upon the whole, fare the worse for it, as I am returned with a very keen appetite to the work. This picture is the great object of my mind at present. You have been already informed, I have no doubt, of the subject which we have chosen; the adorning a Term of Hymen with festoons of flowers. This affords sufficient employment to the figures, and gives an opportunity of introducing a variety of graceful historical attitudes. I have every inducement to exert myself on this occasion, both from

the confidence you have placed in me, and from the subjects you have presented to me, which are such as I am never likely to meet with again as long as I live, and I flatter myself that, however inferior the picture may be to what I wish it, or what it ought, it will be the best picture I ever painted. I beg leave to congratulate you and Mrs. G———, and express my sincere wishes for that perfect happiness to which you are both so well intitled.

"I am, with great respect, &c.

"JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"I shall send away your picture (the best of the two) immediately; the other I know is to remain here. I have forgot to what place it is to be sent."

The visit to Oxford, mentioned in the foregoing letter, gained an additional honour to be conferred upon Sir Joshua, the variety of whose talents, added to the eminence he had acquired, qualified him to share the honours of the first scientific institutions, and in consequence of which he had, for some time before the present period, been admitted to the Royal, Antiquarian, and Dilletante Societies; and when the late Earl of Guildford, then Lord North, was installed Chancellor of the University of Oxford, in the first week of July in this year, Sir Joshua was, at the same time, admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law.

On that day fifteen persons only were admitted; and it is a remarkable fact, that Sir Joshua, and Dr. Beattie just arrived from Scotland, were the only two who were distinguished by an encomium from Dr. Vansittart, the Professor of Civil Law, whose duty it is to present the graduates to the Chancellor. It is also well known to be customary, when the graduate bows and takes his seat, that there should, on particular occasions, be a clapping of hands in the theatre, sometimes loud, and sometimes but faint; on this occasion, however, it is related, that those two were the only personages who received any marks of extraordinary applause.

Sir Joshua about this time, after repeated and most earnest invitations from a noble duke, to visit him at his splendid mansion, at length complied with his request, and arriving in the evening he was much mortified to find a very cold reception both from the duke and duchess, for which he was totally unable to account, as previously they had always been so gracious; when afterwards relating the circumstance to his sister, she asked him if he appeared before them in his boots, just as he came off his journey, and not in his evening dress; he answered yes. Then said she, that was the very reason; they thought it a mark of great disrespect in your not complying with the etiquette.

I remember Dr. Jenner told me a circumstance something similar of a physician in the country,

who was called upon to visit a duchess then in the neighbourhood, who was near dying of an inflammation in her bowels, and when he came to the house, having rid on horseback, the attendant servant on the duchess would not suffer him to enter the sick apartment, though her grace was in such immediate and imminent danger of her life, until he had equipped himself in silk stockings, shoes, and buckles, which they lent him for that purpose.

Sir Joshua entertained a great friendship for Dr. Beattie, whom he esteemed as an honest humble man of considerable abilities: indeed, it forms a very prominent feature in the "Life" of the latter, where it is dwelt on with an allowable degree of complacency, that Sir Joshua paid him much attention during his visits to London, (respecting him more for his virtues than his talents,) frequently entertaining him, both at his house in town, and at his villa on Richmond Hill, testifying, by every means in his power, the esteem he felt for him as a friend, and the opinion he held respecting his writings; while, as Sir William Forbes adds, Dr. Beattie "on the other hand, loved Sir Joshua, for the amiable simplicity of his manners and character, and justly admired the masterly productions of his pencil, as well as duly appreciated his merit in the composition of those truly classical discourses which he delivered to the students in the Royal Academy."

The gentleman above alluded to will, I have no doubt, excuse me in this instance for availing myself of some particulars in his work, highly honourable to both of his amiable and deceased friends, and which refer pointedly to the present part of the subject. Sir William observes, that how properly Dr. Beattie estimated the various talents of Sir Joshua, may be drawn from an extract of his diary, and which he transcribed in the Doctor's own words, because, being a private record merely of his own thoughts, it may be relied on as speaking the genuine language of his heart. This extract is dated Sunday the 15th of August, and says, "We proposed (Dr. and Mrs. B.) to have gone to Arno's Grove, but Sir Joshua Reynolds insisted on it, that we should stay till tomorrow, and partake of a haunch of venison with him to-day, at his house on Richmond Hill. Accordingly at eleven, Mrs. Beattie, Miss Reynolds, Mr. Baretti, and Mr. Palmer, set out in Sir Joshua's coach for Richmond. At twelve he and I went in a post chaise, and by the way paid a visit to the Bishop of Chester,* who was very earnest for us to fix a day for dining with him; but I could not fix one just now, on account of the present state of my affairs. After dining at Richmond, we all returned to town, about eight o'clock. This day I had a great deal of conversation with

* Dr. Markham.

Sir Joshua Reynolds on critical and philosophical subjects. I find him to be a man, not only of excellent taste in painting and poetry, but of an enlarged understanding and truly philosophical mind. His notions of painting are not at all the same with those that are entertained by the generality of painters and others. Artificial and contrasted attitudes, and groupes, he makes no account of; it is the truth and simplicity of nature which he is ambitious to imitate; and these, it must be allowed, he possesses the art of blending with the most exquisite grace, the most animated expression. He speaks with contempt of those who suppose grace to consist in erect position, turned out toes, or the frippery of modern dress. Indeed, whatever account we make of the colouring of this great artist, (which some people object to,) it is impossible to deny him the praise of being the greatest designer of any age. In his pictures there is a grace, a variety, an expression, a simplicity, which I have never seen in the works of any other painter. His portraits are distinguished from all others, by this, that they exhibit an exact imitation, not only of the features, but also of the character of the person represented. His picture of Garrick, between Tragedy and Comedy, he tells me he finished in a week," &c. &c. This although but an aukward description of Sir Joshua's character, yet I insert to shew what an impression his talents had made on the simplicity of Beattie.

Dr. Beattie has also strongly marked his high admiration of his friend in his Essay on Poetry and Music, where he joins his name with that of Raffaelle. In this, having first given praise to both for their assuming nature as their model, to the utter exclusion of fashion, at least as far as is possible, he adds, that "on this account their works must give pleasure, and appear elegant as long as men are capable of forming general ideas, and of judging from them. The last mentioned incomparable artist (meaning Sir Joshua,) is particularly observant of children, whose looks and attitudes, being less under the controul of art, and local manners, are more characteristical of the species than those of men and women. This field of observation supplied him with many fine figures, particularly that most excellent one of Comedy, struggling for and winning (for who can resist her?) the affections of Garrick—a figure which could never have occurred to the imagination of a painter who had confined his views to grown persons, looking and moving in all the formality of polite life—a figure which, in all ages and countries, would be pronounced natural and engaging."

To all these testimonies in favor of Sir Joshua, Sir William Forbes adds, from his own pen, this elegant compliment: "To that great artist, and excellent man, whose house one of our mutual friends has well denominated the common centre

of union for the great, the accomplished, the learned and the ingenious, I must equally pay my grateful acknowledgments for the uninterrupted friendship with which he honoured me, as well as for an introduction to the notice of some distinguished characters, to whom I should not otherwise have had the means of being known."

There is a remarkably fine allegorical picture painted by Sir Joshua, representing the portrait of Dr. James Beattie.

The progress of this celebrated picture is described in Dr. Beattie's Diary, where he says, "August 16th, (Monday,) breakfasted with Sir Joshua Reynolds, who this day began the allegorical picture. I sat to him five hours, in which time he finished my head, and sketched out the rest of my figure. The likeness is most striking, and the execution most masterly. The figure is as large as life. The plan is not yet fixed for the rest of the picture. Though I sat five hours I was not in the least fatigued; for by placing a large mirror opposite to my face, Sir Joshua Reynolds put it into my power to see every stroke of his pencil; and I was greatly entertained to observe the progress of the work, and the easy and masterly manner of the artist, which differs as much from that of all the other painters I have seen at work, as the execution of Giardini on the violin differs from that of a common fiddler."

ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM OXFORD

This portrait of Beattie, when finished, represented the doctor in his university dress as Doctor of Laws, with his volume on the Immutability of Truth under his arm. The angel of Truth is going before him and beating down the Vices, Envy, Falsehood, &c. which are represented by a group of figures falling at his approach, and the principal head in this group is made an exact likeness of Voltaire. When Dr. Goldsmith called on Sir Joshua and saw this picture, he was very indignant at it, and remonstrated with him, saying, "It very ill becomes a man of your eminence and character, Sir Joshua, to condescend to be a mean flatterer, or to wish to degrade so high a genius as Voltaire before so mean a writer as Dr. Beattie; for Dr. Beattie and his book together will, in the space of ten years, not be known ever to have been in existence, but your allegorical picture, and the fame of Voltaire will live for ever to your disgrace as a flatterer."

So much was said respecting the allegorical meaning of Dr. Beattie's picture at the time, that I may be permitted to take some further notice of it; particularly as it gave rise to attacks upon Sir Joshua, not only as to his judgement in its conception, but as to his prudence and propriety in making personal allusions.

Whilst it was yet in its progress, Mrs. Montague wrote to Beattie on the subject, saying, "I

am delighted with Sir Joshua Reynolds's plan, and do not doubt but he will make a very noble picture of it. I class Sir Joshua with the greatest geniuses that have ever appeared in the art of painting; and I wish he was employed by the public in some great work that would do honour to our country in future ages. He has the spirit of a Grecian artist. The Athenians did not employ such men in painting portraits to place over a chimney or the door of a private cabinet. I long to see the picture he is now designing; virtue and truth are subjects worthy of the artist and the man. He has an excellent moral character, and is most pleasing and amiable in society; and with great talents has uncommon humility and gentleness."

Sir William Forbes enters, indeed, more particularly into the subject; and, in addition to my own testimony, that Sir Joshua meant not personally to offend any one by the composition, (though he was not offended himself at *some* likeness being discovered, as I shall shew by a letter in a subsequent part of this Memoir,) I shall give part of Sir William's observations on this point. He says, "In this inestimable piece, which exhibits an exact resemblance of Dr. Beattie's countenance, at that period; he is represented in the gown of Doctor of Laws, with which he was so recently invested at Oxford. Close to the portrait, the artist has introduced an angel, holding

in one hand a pair of scales, as if weighing Truth in the balance, and with the other hand pushing down three hideous figures, supposed to represent Sophistry, Scepticism, and Infidelity; in allusion to Dr. Beattie's Essay on Truth, which had been the foundation of all his fame, and of all the distinction which had been paid him.

"The likeness of Dr. Beattie was most striking, and nothing can exceed the beauty of the angel. The whole composition, as well as execution, is in the very best manner of that inimitable painter, and it has had the good fortune, not always the case with Sir Joshua's pictures, masterly as they are in every other respect, of perfectly preserving the colouring, which is as beautiful at the distance of upwards of thirty years as it was at first, with as much of mellowness only as one could desire.

"Of this admirable performance, Sir Joshua was pleased to make Dr. B. a present, of which he was very justly proud. He preserved it with the utmost care, keeping it always covered with a green silk curtain, and left it to his niece Mrs. Glennie."

A mezzotinto print has been done from it, and there is also a very handsome engraving from it, in Forbes's Life of Beattie; and that writer adds, "Because one of these figures was a lean figure, (alluding to the subordinate ones introduced,) and the other a fat one, people of lively imaginations pleased themselves with finding in them the portraits of Voltaire and Hume. But Sir Joshua,

I have reason to believe, had no such thought when he painted those figures."

It is a curious circumstance, too, that Dr. Beattie either mistook the allegorical design himself, or else gave it intentionally another meaning, perhaps out of modesty, for he says, in one of his letters, that the figures represent Prejudice, Scepticism, and Folly, who are shrinking away from the light of the sun that beams on the breast of the angel!

In the latter part of the summer, Sir Joshua made an excursion to Plymouth, whilst on a visit to Plympton; a visit of compliment, for having already been made a freeman of his native town of Plympton, this mark of respect was followed by his being chosen alderman and mayor of that borough, generally called Plympton Maurice, or Earl's Plympton.*

On this occasion he presented his portrait, painted by himself, to the corporation, who placed it in the town hall. It is a good picture with a light sky back ground, and in his academical dress as doctor of laws. †

* To distinguish it from Plympton St Mary's, formerly a convent of Benedictines, about half a mile distant, the abbot of which was lord of the manor, and sat in the house of peers. After the dissolution of religious houses, the town was incorporated by a charter granted in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, under a mayor, recorder, eight aldermen, or principal burgesses, who are called common councilmen, a bailiff, and town clerk, &c.

† The Rev. Mr. Alcock, vicar of Cornwood, a parish in the

So strongly was Sir Joshua attached to the place of his birth, that he declared that this circumstance of his being chosen as mayor, gave him more pleasure than any other honour which he had received during his life: and this sentiment he declared, on one occasion, when it was rather out of place; as the following anecdote will shew.

Of the small villa already mentioned in Dr. Beattie's Diary, which Sir Joshua built for his recreation, on Richmond Hill, Sir William Chambers was the architect; but not because it was intended to make any display of taste in the building, for convenience alone was consulted in it. In the summer season it was the frequent custom of Sir Joshua to dine at this place with select parties of his friends. It happened some little time before he was to be elected Mayor of Plympton,

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neighbourhood, presented to Sir Joshua the following distich on the receipt of this valuable present to the corporation.

> "Laudat Romanus Raphaelem, Græcus Apellem,
> Plympton Reynolden jactat, utrique parem."

But the new mayor though perhaps pleased with the compliment, modestly declared that he thought it would be assuming too much honour to himself, to have it affixed to, or even put on the back of, the picture.

There is another portrait of him in the neighbourhood painted when young, and now in the possession of T. Lane, Esq. of Coffletts, about three miles from Plympton. In this picture he holds one hand over to shadow his eyes, an attitude often chosen by painters when they paint their own portraits.

It is the original picture from which the print was taken that is annexed to this memoir.

as already mentioned, that one day, after dining at the house, himself and his party took an evening walk in Richmond Gardens, when, very unexpectedly, at a turning of one of the avenues, they suddenly met the King, accompanied by a part of the Royal Family; and as his Majesty saw him, it was impossible for him to withdraw without being noticed. The King called to him, and immediately entered into conversation, and told him that he had been informed of the office that he was soon to be invested with, that of being made the Mayor of his native town of Plympton. Sir Joshua was astonished that so minute and inconsiderable a circumstance, which was of importance only to himself, should have come so quickly to the knowledge of the King; but he assured his Majesty of its truth, saying that it was an honour which gave him more pleasure than any other he had ever received in his life; and then, luckily recollecting himself, added, "except that which your Majesty was graciously pleased to bestow upon me;" alluding to his knighthood.

About this period, and towards the latter end of 1773, a circumstance arose which promised to be highly beneficial to the Art, but which unfortunately did not fulfil its early promises.

The chapel of Old Somerset-House, which had been given by his Majesty to the Royal Academy, was mentioned one evening at the meeting, as a place which offered a good opportunity of con-

vincing the public at large of the advantages that would arise from ornamenting cathedrals and churches with the productions of the pencil; productions which might be useful in their effect, and at the same time not likely to give offence in a Protestant country. The idea was therefore started, that if the members should ornament this chapel, the example might thus afford an opening for the introduction of the art into other places of a similar nature; and which, as it was then stated, would not only present a new and noble scene of action, that might become highly ornamental to the kingdom, but would be, in some measure, absolutely necessary for the future labour of the numerous students educated under the auspices of the Royal Academy.

All the members were struck with the propriety, and even with the probability of success which attended the scheme; but Sir Joshua Reynolds, in particular, immediately took it up on a bolder plan, and offered an amendment, saying, that instead of the chapel, they should fly at once at higher game, and undertake St. Paul's Cathedral. The grandeur and magnificent liberality of this idea immediately gained the suffrages and plaudits of all present, and the President was empowered to make the proper application to the Dean and Chapter; an application which was immediately acceded to on their part. At that time Dr. Newton, Bishop of Bristol, was the dean of St. Paul's,

and he was a strong advocate in favour of this scheme.

A meeting of the Academy then took place, when six artists were chosen for the attempt; these were Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. West the present president, Barry, Dance, Cipriani and Angelica Kauffman.

The Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufactures also took up the business, and added four artists to the original number.

The subject, which Sir Joshua proposed to execute, was that of the Virgin and Christ in the Manger, or Nativity; but the whole plan was set aside in consequence of Dr. Terrick, then Bishop of London, having refused his consent.

This has been noticed by Barry, in one of his letters, when he says, "Sir Joshua Reynolds, who had undertaken the management of this business, informed us last Monday, the day after his return from Plympton, where he was chosen mayor, that the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London had never given any consent to it, and that all thoughts about it must consequently drop."

On a subject so important as the improvement of our national buildings, there can be nothing superfluous in adding the following account of the origin of this scheme for decorating the cathedral of St. Paul's with paintings by living artists, which was thus related to me as authentic.

"Dr. Newton, late bishop of Bristol, and dean of St. Paul's, was an enthusiastic admirer and lover of the arts, and also a great friend to artists. One day, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. West were dining with him at his house, and, in the course of conversation, one of them observed how great an ornament it would be to that cathedral if it were to be furnished with appropriate paintings to fill up those large vacant compartments and pannels, and which the architect, Sir Christopher Wren himself, had purposed to have added to finish the building. On this, Mr. West generously offered to give a picture of his own painting, and Sir Joshua cheerfully agreed to follow his example, in order to make a beginning. Mr. West proposed to paint the subject of Moses with the Laws; and Sir Joshua offered a Nativity. The bishop was enraptured with the plan; and he, being dean of St. Paul's, concluded that his influence was fully sufficient to produce a completion of the business.

"The guardians of the cathedral are the King, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, and the Lord-mayor of London, for the time being.

"The good Dr. Newton first went to the King, whose ready and hearty consent was immediately given, as were likewise those of the archbishop, and also of the lord mayor; and the chapter, with the dean at their head, of course had no objection. But unluckily, the very person who possessed most

power in that church, was the last consulted on the business; that was Dr. Terrick, then bishop of London: and when Dr. Newton paid him a visit to inform him of the hopeful progress he had made, and to receive his consent, the old bishop patiently heard him to the end of his speech, when, assuming a very grave countenance, he replied, "My good Lord Bishop of Bristol, I have already been distantly and imperfectly informed of such an affair having been in contemplation; but as the sole power at last remains with myself, I therefore inform your lordship, that whilst I live and have the power, I will never suffer the doors of the metropolitan church to be opened for the introduction of popery into it."*

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* It is but justice to the memory of the learned prelate to give the following, which is Bishop Newton's own account of the design of ornamenting St. Paul's cathedral, of which church he was dean and a great friend to the project: but it is observable, that the bishop says nothing of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts.——

"As he, the bishop, was known to be such a lover of their art, the Royal Academy of Painters, in 1773, made an application to him by their worthy president, Sir Joshua Reynolds, representing, that the art of painting, notwithstanding the present encouragement given to it in England, would never grow up to maturity and perfection, unless it could be introduced into churches as in foreign countries; individuals being, for the most part, fonder of their own portraits, and those of their families, than of any historical pieces: that, to make a beginning, the royal academicians offered their services to the dean and chapter to decorate St. Paul's with scripture histories, and six of their members, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. West, Angelica Kauffman,

"Dr. Newton was much mortified at the refusal, and reflected upon himself as having de-

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Cipriani, Mr. Barry, and, I think, Mr. Dance, had been chosen to paint each a picture for this purpose; that these pictures should be seen, examined, and approved by the academy before they were offered to the dean and chapter, and the dean and chapter might then give directions for alterations and amendments, and receive or refuse them as they thought them worthy or unworthy of the places for which they were designed: none should be put up but such as were entirely approved, and they should all be put up at the charge of the academy, without any expense to the members of the church. St. Paul's had, all along, wanted some such ornaments, for rich and beautiful as it is without, it is too plain and unadorned within.

"Sir James Thornhill had painted the history of St. Paul in the cupola, the worst part of the church that could have been painted; for the pictures there are most exposed to the changes of the weather, suffer greatly from damp and heat, and, let what will be done to prevent it, it is to be feared, must, in no very long time, all decay and perish. It was happy, therefore, that Sir James's eight original sketches and designs, which were higher finished than usual, in order to be carried and shewn to Queen Anne, were purchased of his family at the recommendation of the dean, in the year 1779, and are hung up in the great room at the Chapter House. Besides the exposition of these pictures to the weather, in the cupola, they are at such a height, that they cannot conveniently be seen from any part, and add little to the beauty and ornament of the church. They had better have been placed below, for below they would have been seen; and there are compartments which were originally designed for bas-reliefs, or such like decorations; but the parliament, as it is said, having taken part of the fabric money, and applied it to King William's wars, Sir Christopher Wren complained that his wings were clipt, and the church was deprived of its ornaments. Here, then, a fair opportunity was offered for retrieving the loss and supplying former defect. It was certainly a most generous and noble offer on the part of the academicians, and

stroyed the project by his indiscreet management, in not having made his first application to the offended Bishop of London."

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the public ought to think themselves greatly obliged to them for it. The dean and chapter were all equally pleased with it; and the dean, in the fullness of his heart, went to communicate it to the great patron of arts, and readily obtained his royal consent and approbation. But the trustees of the fabric, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, were also to be consulted, and they disapproved of the measure. Bishop Terrick, both as trustee of the fabric, and as bishop of the diocese, strenuously opposed it: whether he took it amiss, that the proposal was not first made to him, and by him the intelligence conveyed to his Majesty; or whether he was really afraid, as he said, that it would occasion a great noise and clamour against it, as an artful introduction of popery. Whatever were his reasons, it must be acknowledged that some other serious persons disapproved the setting up of pictures in churches. It was in truth not an object of that concern, as to run the risk of a general outcry and clamour against it; but the general opinion plainly appeared to be on the contrary side much in favour of the scheme: and, whatever might have been the case in the days of our first reformers, there was surely no danger now of pictures seducing our people into popery and idolatry;—they would only make scripture history better known and remembered. Many other churches and chapels have adopted, and are adopting, this measure, as Rochester, Winchester, Salisbury, St. Stephen's Walbrook, and several colleges in the universities. The House of Commons have given a rich painted window to their church of St. Margaret's, Westminster. Bishop Terrick himself approved, if not contributed, to the setting up of a picture of the Annunciation, by Cipriani, in the chapel of his own college at Clare Hall, at Cambridge:—and why should such ornaments be denied to the capital church in the kingdom? The dean, rather than the scheme should be totally laid aside, proposed to make a trial and experiment how the thing would bear. Most churches and chapels, he observed, have something of ornament and decoration

At that time all sculptures were also prohibited from that cathedral; for Dr. Newton, the dean,

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about the communion table. You sometimes see, even in the country,

> Moses and Aaron upon a church wall,
> Holding up the Commandments for fear they should fall.

But St. Paul's will not well admit of any ornament over the communion table, because it would darken the windows there, which give the principal light to the choir. But near to the communion table are two doors, one opening into the north and the other into the south aisle; and over these two doors are proper compartments for two pictures. It was therefore proposed by the dean, that Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. West should paint these two pictures; Mr. West's design being the giving of the two tables to Moses from the cloud of glory, the people all standing beneath; and Sir Joshua's design being the infant Jesus lying in the manger, with the shepherds surrounding, and the light flowing all from the Child, as in the famous Notte of Corregio: here was the beginning both of the Law and of the Gospel; here was nothing to encourage superstition or idolatry; nothing that could possibly give any one any just offence. Let the trial only be made by these pictures; and if they occasion any noise and clamour, then let an end be put to the whole affair; if they are well received, and approved and applauded by the public, then let the other artists proceed. But reasonable as this proposition was generally thought to be, it was over-ruled by the same authority as the former; and whether the merits or demerits are greater of those who favoured the design, or of those who defeated it, the present age and impartial posterity must judge. Sir Joshua has wrought up his design into a noble picture; Mr. West exhibited his drawing at one of the public exhibitions of the Royal Academy. Mr. Barry has published an etching of his design, the Fall of the Angels, both excellent, both masterly performances; and it is much to be wished that the other artists would follow their example."

who died soon after, left an injunction in his will, that a monument to his memory should be erected

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"Some time before this, another opportunity was unfortunately lost of decorating St. Paul's. When Bishop Newton was only one of the residentiaries, a statuary, of some note, came to him in his summer month of residence, desiring leave to set up a monument in St. Paul's for one who had formerly been a lord mayor and representative of the city of London. The dean, and his other brethren of the chapter, being in the country, he went to consult with Archbishop Secker upon the subject; and Archbishop Secker was so far from making any objection, that he much approved the design of monuments, saying what advantages foreign churches had over ours, and that St. Paul's was too naked and bare, for want of monuments, which would be a proper ornament, and give a venerable air to the church, provided care was taken that there be nothing improper in their structure, or in the inscriptions upon them. But when the thing was proposed to Bishop Osbaldeston, he was violent against it: Sir Christopher Wren had designed no such things; there had been no monuments in all the time before he was bishop, and in his time there should be none. He was desired to look upon the print which hung over his head of the inner section of St. Paul's, wherein he would see that Sir Christopher Wren had designed monuments, especially in the recesses under the windows; but he was not to be convinced; churches, he said, were better without monuments than with them. Since the bishop was so peremptory, it was judged proper not to push the matter any farther; especially since the person for whom the monument was desired was not one of the most illustrious characters, nor deserving to be the first instance of the kind. Few, I conceive, will agree in opinion with Bishop Osbaldeston, that churches are better without monuments than with them. The sense of mankind has been contrary in all ages and in all countries; and it is really a wonder that no more applications have been made for erecting monuments in St. Paul's. Westminster Abbey is too full of them. It may be said to be incrusted with monuments, and in some places they are ridiculously piled two stories high over

in that church if possible, which was to cost five hundred pounds, with the hope of introducing the arts into that cathedral: this was denied to the family, and his monument, executed by Banks the sculptor, and a very fine one, was then placed in St. Bride's church, of which Newton was the rector, according to his order, in case of a refusal of his first request.

The following petition was intended to be presented to the King, in which is fully evinced the liberal intentions of those artists who first suggested the scheme of making an offer to the public, of much less advantage to themselves than to their successors, and which would give foreigners an idea that the arts were encouraged in the country. Thus the nation would have been partakers of an honour that belonged solely to these spirited individuals.

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one another. At St. Paul's there is ample room, and spaces designed for monuments: and what a magnificent and glorious church would it be with a proper intermixture of pictures and statues, and what an ornament and honour to the metropolis and to the kingdom! The great difficulty is to find a suitable person to begin with, of eminence and dignity sufficient to set an example to the rest. Several gentlemen were desirous of opening a public subscription for a monument to Mr. Pope in St. Paul's as had been done to Shakspeare in Westminster Abbey: but Mr. Pope's religion was some objection to this scheme. It was a better thought of erecting the first monument to Bishop Sherlock, whose father had been Dean, and himself Bishop of London so many years."—*Bishop Newton's Life and Anecdotes, prefixed to his Works*, 1782, 4to. I. pp. 105—109.

"TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

"SIRE,

"We, the Academicians of the Royal Academy beg leave to express our sentiments of constant gratitude for the patriotic zeal with which your Majesty has protected the arts of design in these kingdoms, by the establishment of the Royal Academy, and by the continual support and countenance with which you have honored that institution.

"Your Majesty, by your individual encouragement of the arts of design, has given an example to the world equally wise and princely in the magnificent biblical paintings with which you have decorated St. George's Hall,* and the Royal Chapel of Windsor: herein you have directed those arts to their true end—the cultivation of religion and virtue; for it is by such means only that they have risen to perfection in Greece and Italy, and it is by these means only that they can rise to perfection in any other country.

"As artists—as lovers of virtue and our country, we anxiously wish to see the truly royal example which your Majesty has given, followed in the principal church of these kingdoms, St. Paul's cathedral, according to the intention of its architect, Sir Christopher Wren: and, instead of the present unfinished state of its inside, we wish to

* Alluding to the pictures painted by Mr. West, by order of the King, but not yet put up in the chapel.

see ti decorated in a manner suitable to the beauty and dignity of its external architecture.

"Therefore, the historical painters in your Royal Academy, convinced of the advantage which would arise to the arts, and the country, in every point of view, from such an undertaking, are desirous to engage in the decoration of this noble building, with paintings from the Bible, in the most liberal manner; for they conceive that the very small compensation with which their love for their art would induce them to be satisfied, might easily be raised by keeping open the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy a fortnight longer than usual, for two or three years; or by an allowance for a certain time from the additional price, which the exhibition of such works would bring to the cathedral; or by any other means that your Majesty's wisdom may condescend to suggest.

"As the arts of design owe their present prosperity, in these kingdoms, to your Majesty's paternal care, so we are tempted to look up to your gracious protection for the commencement of the intended work, in obtaining the consent of the dean and chapter for that purpose, and for any other preparatory measures, which, in your Majesty's wisdom, may seem needful."

(Signed)

In this year also it was, that the Literary Club, which owed its origin, in a great measure, to Sir

Joshua, was enlarged by the addition of two valuable members; the late Earl of Charlemont, and David Garrick: after which some others were admitted to this select circle of friends, soon after which, a dinner of singular kind of accommodation was given by Mr. Thrale, at his brewery, to Sir Joshua, Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, Edmund Burke, Baretti, and others, who dined on beefsteaks broiled on the coppers, seated in a newly made brewing vessel, sufficiently capacious to contain the company conveniently.

So much was Sir Joshua now admired and esteemed, that his acquaintance was considered as an honour, and his name as a passport; and the latter was eagerly sought after even by those who wished to introduce the efforts of literature to the world.

A very handsome compliment was paid to him at this period, by the editor of Richardson's "Theory of Painting," who dedicated this work to the President.

"SIR,

"A new and improved edition of the works of Jonathan Richardson cannot be inscribed with so much propriety to any body, as to you. The author has, in his "Theory of Painting," discoursed with great judgement on the excellencies of this divine art, and recommended the study of it with a warmth approaching to enthusiasm. His

ideas are noble, and his observation learned. I am emboldened to say this, from a conversation which I had the honour to have with you on this subject.

"Had Richardson lived to see the inimitable productions of your pencil, he would have congratulated his country on the prospect of a School of Painting likely to contend successfully with those of Italy.

"At the same time, he would have confessed, that your admirable discourses would have rendered his own writings less necessary.

"I am, with the greatest respect," &c., &c.

1774.

ÆTAT. 50.

In the early part of 1774, a resolution was entered into by the Society of Arts, that a series of Historical or Allegorical pictures should be painted by the first artists in the kingdom, to decorate their new room in the Adelphi. The plan proposed was, that there should be eight historical and two allegorical; the subjects of the former to be taken from the British Annals.

It was also proposed, that the profits arising from the exhibition of those works, for a limited time, should be appropriated to the remuneration of the artists employed. The historical painters chosen were Sir Joshua Reynolds, Angelica Kauffman,

Mess. West, Cipriani, Barry, Wright, Mortimer, and Dance; whilst the allegorical designs were to have been executed by Penny and Romney. Sir Joshua, however, after some deliberation, thought proper to decline the proposal; and the rooms have been since decorated, as is well known, by Barry alone.

This latter artist had now been returned some time from Italy, and notwithstanding the friendship always expressed and shewn towards him by Sir Joshua, he seems to have been actuated in his conduct towards *him*, in several instances, by a capricious ill will, for which Sir Joshua never gave him any cause, but which may, perhaps, have arisen from a petty jealousy at Sir Joshua's having painted a portrait of Burke for his friend Mr. Thrale.

This dispute, for such it was at least on the part of Barry, has been noticed by Barry's biographer; and though I cannot agree with him in part of his observations, yet I shall here give the whole passage as explanatory of the occurrence. In the life prefixed to his works, it is said, that "it may be necessary to premise, that about this time a kind of ill-humour had possessed Barry, in consequence of the extreme intimacy of the Burkes with Sir Joshua Reynolds, which led him to suppose that those friends overlooked his merits to aggrandize Sir Joshua's. There might be (for those things are common to frail human nature) some envy entertained by Barry towards Sir Joshua,

for his respectable connections and his splendid mode of entertaining them, and, perhaps, some little jealousy in the mild Sir Joshua towards him, for a reputation that was rising to eclipse or outrun his own."

"Whatever might be the cause, we see Barry standing upon a point of silly etiquette with the man of all others in the world the most honoured and loved, and in a way to endanger the imputation of ingratitude, had it not been for the dignified moderation displayed by Mr. Burke on the occasion."

This is an allusion to a very curious correspondence which took place at this period between Burke and Barry, respecting the neglect of the latter in executing a portrait of his patron. The correspondence is preserved in Barry's works; and I am of opinion, that whoever reads it, will agree with me, that there was no necessity for accusing Sir Joshua of feeling jealousy at Barry's rising fame, when Barry's own conduct, arising from the waywardness of his own disposition, will easily account for his feeling irritation respecting Sir Joshua.

Indeed his biographer's own confession, of his envious sensations, is enough to preclude the necessity of seeking for any other cause; and, I trust, that the numerous instances which I shall yet have occasion to produce of Sir Joshua's professional suavity and feelings, both in theory and

in practice, will do away any impression which the foregoing passage might have excited to his prejudice.

On the 22d of February in this year, Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote the following letter to Dr. Beattie, which I adduce as a fair specimen of his epistolary powers:

"I sit down to relieve my mind from great anxiety and uneasiness, and I am sorry when I say that this proceeds from not answering your letter sooner. This seems very strange, you will say, since the cause may be so easily removed; but the truth of the matter is, I waited to be able to inform you that your picture was finished, which, however, I cannot now do.

"I must confess to you, that when I sat down, I did intend to tell a sort of a white lie, *that it was finished*; but on recollecting that I was writing to the author of truth, about a picture of truth, I felt that I ought to say nothing but the truth. The truth then is, that the picture probably will be finished before you receive this letter; for there is not above a day's work remaining to be done.

"Mr. Hume has heard from somebody that *he* is introduced in the picture not much to his credit; there is only a figure covering his face with his hands, which they may call 'Hume,' or any body else; it is true it has a tolerable broad back. As for Voltaire, I intended he should be one of the group.

"I intended to write more, but I hear the postman's bell. Dr. Johnson, who is with me now, desires his compliments."

This *unfortunate* picture, which seems doomed to have excited mistaken displeasure, was exhibited in the year 1774; and Mrs. Montague says of it, in a letter to Beattie, "Your portrait is in the exhibition; it is very like, and the piece worthy of the pencil of Sir Joshua." Some others, however, were not so pleased with it as the lady seemed to be; for Beattie himself, in a letter written to her on the 27th of May, in that year, observes, "Mr. Mason seems now to be tolerably reconciled to the subscription, but he has found a new subject of concern, in this allegorical picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which he thinks can hardly fail to hurt my character in good earnest. I know not certainly in what light Mr. Mason considers this picture; but so far as I have yet heard, he is singular in his opinion.

"If Mr. Gray had done me the honour to address an ode to me, and speak in high terms of my attack on the sceptics, my enemies might have blamed him for his partiality, and the world might have thought that he had employed his muse in too mean an office; but would any body have blamed me? If Sir Joshua Reynolds thinks more favorably of me than I deserve, (which he certainly does,) and if he entertains the same favourable sentiments of my cause, which I wish him

and all the world to entertain, I should be glad to know from Mr. Mason, what there is in all this to fix any blame on my character? Indeed if *I* had planned this picture, and urged Sir Joshua to paint it, and paid him for his trouble, and then have solicited admittance for it into the Exhibition, then the world would have had good reason to exclaim against me as a vain coxcomb; but I am persuaded, that nobody will ever suspect me of this, for nobody can do so, without first supposing that I am a fool."

I have already recorded much criticism, and some censure, respecting the emblematical portrait of Beattie, but it would be the height of injustice to accuse Dr. Beattie of the least blame in respect to the composition of this picture; as the head alone was the only part of it that was finished when the Doctor left London, and returned to Scotland: nor was he consulted by, or had the least knowledge of Sir Joshua's intention till the picture was completely finished; and as it was the design of Reynolds to make a present of this picture to the Doctor, there was the more propriety in not consulting him upon it, for he thus proposed to pay him a high and elegant compliment on his book on the Immutability of Truth. Neither could the Doctor, afterwards, when he saw it, with any kind of decorum, make objections to this valuable present, given to him as a special token of friendship: and, indeed, after all, it must be

clearly perceived, that the whole of the clamour raised about this portrait was the sole produce of envy and ignorance.

The hint for the composition of this memorable picture (as I have been informed) Sir Joshua received from a fine picture by Tintoretto, of a subject somewhat similar, which is in the King's library at Buckingham House. As to the portrait of Voltaire, that Sir Joshua certainly intended to represent in the group, for I well remember, at the time, his having a medal of him, from which he copied the likeness. But as to Hume, I am as certain that he never intended to place him in the picture, nor is there any such resemblance, or the least reason to suppose that the painter thought of him at the time. We see in the above instance how easily envy can swell a mole-hill to a mountain.

Of this subject, however, I presume my readers will think I have given them enough; I shall, therefore, revert to another friend of Sir Joshua's, poor Goldsmith, who left this world on the 4th of April, 1774; the first too of those on whom the epitaphs had been so playfully written, as I have before alluded to in another place.

Just before his death, he had nearly completed a design for the execution of an "Universal Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences." Of this he had published the Prospectus, or, at least, had distributed copies of it amongst his friends and

acquaintances. It did not meet with any warm encouragement, however, from the booksellers, although Sir Joshua Reynolds, Johnson, Garrick, and several others of his literary connections had promised him their assistance on various subjects: and the design was, I believe, entirely given up even previous to his demise.*

Sir Joshua was much affected by the death of Goldsmith, to whom he had been a very sincere friend. He did not touch the pencil for that day, a circumstance most extraordinary for him, who passed *no day without a line.* He acted as executor, and managed in the best manner, the confused state of the Doctor's affairs. At first he intended to have made a grand funeral for him, assisted by several subscriptions to that intent, and to have buried him in the Abbey; his pall-bearers to have been Lord Shelburne, Lord Louth, Sir Joshua himself, Burke, Garrick, &c.; but, on second thoughts, he resolved to have him buried in the plainest and most private manner possible, observing that the most pompous funerals are soon past and forgotten; and that it would be much more prudent to apply what money could be procured, to the purpose of a more substantial and

* I have often heard him complain of the treatment he met with from the booksellers of his time, and the uncivil manner with which they paid him money; but probably this was produced by his own conduct towards them.

more lasting memorial of his departed friend, by a monument; and he was accordingly, privately interred in the Temple burying-ground.

Sir Joshua went himself to Westminster Abbey, and fixed upon the place where Goldsmith's monument now stands, over a door in the Poets' Corner. He thought himself lucky in being able to find so conspicuous a situation for it, as there scarcely remained another so good.

Nollekens, the sculptor, was employed to make the monument, and Dr. Johnson composed the epitaph.

There is a very fine portrait, which is the only original one, of Dr. Goldsmith, now at Knowle, the seat of the late Duke of Dorset, painted by Sir Joshua.

I remember Miss Reynolds said of this portrait, that it was a very great likeness of the Doctor; but the most flattered picture she ever knew her brother to have painted.

A lady, who was a great friend of Dr. Goldsmith, earnestly desired to have a lock of his hair to keep as a memorial of him; and his coffin was opened again, after it had been closed up, to procure this lock of hair from his head: this relick is still in the possession of the family, and is the only one of the kind which has been preserved of the Doctor.

To the record of poor Goldsmith's death, I may add one or two anecdotes not generally known.

I have been informed by the lady who requested a lock of his hair before interment, that he once read to her several chapters of a novel in manuscript which he had in contemplation; but which he did not live to finish, now irrecoverably lost. The same person has also some of his poetry, never yet published.

An observation of Dr. Beattie, respecting the deceased poet, in a letter to Mrs. Montague, must not be passed over. "I am sorry for poor Goldsmith. There were some things in his temper which I did not like; but I liked many things in his genius; and I was sorry to find, last summer, that he looked upon me as a person who seemed to stand between him and his interest. However, when *next* we meet, all this will be forgotten, and the jealousy of authors, which, Dr. Gregory used to say, was next to that of physicians, will be no more."

Soon after Goldsmith's death, certain persons dining with Sir Joshua were commenting rather freely on some part of his works, which, in their opinion, neither discovered talent nor originality. To this, Dr. Johnson listened, in his usual growling manner, for some time; when, at length, his patience being exhausted, he rose, with great dignity, looked them full in the face, and exclaimed, "If nobody was suffered to abuse poor Goldy, but those who could write as well, he would have few censors."

Yet, on another occasion, soon after the death of Goldsmith, a lady* of his acquaintance was condoling with Dr. Johnson on their loss, saying, "Poor Dr. Goldsmith! I am exceedingly sorry for him; he was every man's friend!"

"No, Madam," answered Johnson, "he was no man's friend!"

In this seemingly harsh sentence, however, he merely alluded to the careless and imprudent conduct of Goldsmith, as being no friend even to himself, and when that is the case a man is rendered incapable of being of any essential service to any one else.

It has been generally circulated, and believed by many, that Goldsmith was a mere fool in conversation; but, in truth, this has been greatly exaggerated by such as were really fools. In allusion to this notion Mr. Horace Walpole, who admired his writings, said he was "an inspired ideot," and Garrick described him as one,

"————for shortness call'd Noll,
Who wrote like an angel, but talk'd like poor Poll."

Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned to Boswell that he frequently had heard Goldsmith talk warmly of the pleasure of being liked, and observe how hard it would be if literary excellence should preclude a man from that satisfaction, which he perceived it often did, from the envy which attended it; and

* Miss Frances Reynolds.

therefore Sir Joshua was convinced, that he was intentionally more absurd, in order to lessen himself in social intercourse, trusting that his character would be sufficiently supported by his works. If it was his intention to appear absurd in company, he was often very successful. This, in my own opinion, was really the case; and I think Sir Joshua was so sensible of the advantage of it, that he, yet in a much less degree, followed the same idea, as he never had a wish to impress his company with any awe of the great abilities with which he was endowed, especially when in the society of those high in rank.

Yet it is a fact that a certain nobleman, an intimate friend of Reynolds, had strangely conceived in his mind such a formidable idea of all those persons who had gained great fame as literary characters, that I have heard Sir Joshua say, he verily believed he could no more have prevailed upon this noble person to dine at the same table with Johnson and Goldsmith, than with two tygers.

And again, that he has frequently seen the whole company struck with an awful silence at the entrance of Goldsmith, but that Goldsmith has quickly dispelled the charm, by his boyish and social manners, and he then has soon become the plaything and favorite of the company.

Probably Goldsmith was not much mortified at sometimes appearing little in the eyes of those who he knew were his inferiors, as he might con-

sole himself that he was able to make them feel his superiority whenever he pleased.

Goldsmith, indeed, may serve as an instance to shew how capriciously nature deals out her gifts to mankind; thus frequently bestowing, on the same individual, qualities which the wisest must admire, accompanied by those which the weakest may despise.

His epitaph in Westminster Abbey, written by Dr. Johnson, is a true character of the eccentric poet.

Among the various tributes to his memory, was one by *Courtney Melmoth*, (Mr. Pratt, I believe,) dedicated to Sir Joshua, "who will naturally receive with kindness whatever is designed as a testimony of justice to a friend that is no more." In this, the dedicator has well attempted to pourtray the feelings of Sir Joshua's heart.

In the Dedication of his "Deserted Village" to Sir Joshua Reynolds, already noticed, Goldsmith alludes to the death of his eldest brother, Henry, the clergyman; and his various biographers record another, Maurice, who was a younger brother, and of whom it is stated, by Bishop Percy, that having been bred to no business, he, upon some occasion, complained to Oliver that he found it difficult to live like a gentleman. To this Oliver wrote him an answer, begging that he would, without delay, quit so unprofitable a trade, and betake himself to some handicraft employment. Maurice, wisely,

as the Bishop adds, took the hint, and bound himself apprentice to a cabinet-maker, and when out of his indentures set up in business for himself, in which he was engaged during the viceroyalty of the late Duke of Rutland; and his shop being in Dublin, he was noticed by Mr. Orde, since Lord Bolton, the Lord Lieutenant's Secretary, who recommended him to the patronage of the Duke, out of regard to the memory of his brother.

In consequence of this, he received the appointment of inspector of licences in that metropolis, and was also employed as mace bearer, by the Royal Irish Academy, then just established. Both of these places were compatible with his business: and in the former he gave proof of great integrity by detecting a fraud committed on the revenue in his department; and one by which he himself might have profited, if he had not been a man of principle. He has now been dead not more than fifteen years; I enter more particularly into his history, from having seen the following passage in one of Oliver's letters to him: "You talked of being my only brother—I don't understand you. Where is Charles?"

This, indeed, was a question which Maurice could not answer then, nor for many years afterwards; but as the anecdote is curious, and I have it from a friend on whose authority I can rely, I shall give it a place here nearly in his own words.

My friend informed me, that whilst travelling in

the stage coach towards Ireland, in the autumn of 1791, he was joined at Oswestry by a venerable looking gentleman, who, in the course of the morning, mentioned that his name was *Goldsmith*; when one of the party observed, that if he was going to Ireland, that name would be a passport for him. The stranger smiled, and asked the reason why? to which the other replied, that the memory of *Oliver* was embalmed amongst his countrymen. A tear glistened in the stranger's eye, who immediately answered, "I am his brother." The gentleman who had first made the observation on the name, looked doubtingly, and said, "He has but one brother living; I know him well." "True," replied the stranger, "for it may be said that I am risen from the dead, having been for many years supposed to be no longer in the land of the living. I am Charles the youngest of the family. Oliver I know is dead; but of Henry and Maurice I know nothing."

On being informed of various particulars of his family, the stranger then told his simple tale; which was, that having heard of his brother Noll mixing in the first society in London, he took it for granted that his fortune was made, and that he could soon make a brother's also: he therefore left home without notice; but soon found, on his arrival in London, that the picture he had formed of his brother's situation was too highly coloured; that Noll would not introduce him to his great

friends, and, in fact, that, although out of a jail, he was also often out of a lodging.

Disgusted with this entrance into *high life*, and ashamed to return home, the young man left London without acquainting his brother with his intentions, or even writing to his friends in Ireland; and proceeded, a poor adventurer, to Jamaica, where he lived, for many years, without ever renewing an intercourse with his friends, and by whom he was, of course, supposed to be dead; though Oliver may, at first, have imagined that he had returned to Ireland. Years now passed on, and young Charles, by industry and perseverance, began to save some property; soon after which he married a young lady of some fortune, when his children requiring the advantages of further education, he determined to return to England, to examine into the state of society, and into the propriety of bringing over his wife and family: on this project he was then engaged, and was proceeding to Ireland to visit his native home, and with the intention of making himself known to such of his relatives as might still be living. His plan, however, was to conceal his good fortune until he should ascertain their affection and esteem for him.

On arriving at Dublin, the party separated; and my friend, a few weeks afterwards, returning from the north, called at the hotel where he knew Mr. Goldsmith intended to reside. There he met

him; when the amiable old man, for such he really was, told him that he had put his plan in execution; had given himself as much of the appearance of poverty as he could with propriety, and thus proceeded to the shop of his brother Maurice, where he inquired for several articles, and then noticed the name over the door, asking if it had any connection with the famous Dr. Goldsmith.

"I am his brother—his sole surviving brother," said Maurice.

"What, then," replied the stranger, "is become of the others?"

"Henry has long been dead; and poor Charles has not been heard of for many years."

"But suppose Charles were alive," said the stranger—"would his friends acknowledge him?"

"Oh yes!" replied Maurice, "gladly indeed!"

"He lives, then; but as poor as when he left you."

Maurice instantly leaped over his counter, hugged him in his arms, and, weeping with pleasure, cried, "Welcome—welcome! here you shall find a home and a brother!"

It is needless to add, that this denouement was perfectly agreeable to the stranger, who was then preparing to return to Jamaica to make his proposed family arrangements; but my friend, having been engaged, for the next twenty years, in traversing the four quarters of the globe, being himself a

wanderer, has never, since that period, had an opportunity of making inquiries into the welfare of the stranger; for whom he had, indeed, conceived a great esteem, even on a few days' acquaintance.*

Before I dismiss poor Goldsmith from the stage, it may be proper to notice another dedication to Sir Joshua, prefixed to that edition of his works published by Evans, in which he says—

"SIR,

"I am happy in having your permission to inscribe to you this complete edition of the truly poetical works of your late ingenious friend, Oliver Goldsmith. They will prove a lasting monument of his genius. Every lover of science must deeply lament, that this excellent writer, after long struggling with adversity, finished his mortal career just as his reputation was firmly established, and he had acquired the friendship of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Edmund Burke, the Dean of Derry, Mr. Beauclerk, and Mr. Cumberland, —names which adorn our age and nation. It is, Sir, being merely an *echo* of the *public* voice, to celebrate your admirable productions,

"'In which, to latest time, the artist lives.'

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* I have since been informed, that this Mr. Charles Goldsmith brought his wife and family to England soon after, and resided in Somers' Town in much respectability. He has now been dead some years.

"Had Dr. Goldsmith understood the art of painting, of which he modestly declares himself ignorant, his pen would have done justice to the merits of your pencil. He chose a nobler theme, by declaring his ardent affection for the *virtues of your heart*. That you may long continue, Sir, the ornament of your country and the delight of your friends, is the sincere wish of your most obliged humble servant, T. EVANS."

In closing the year 1774, it is necessary to take a short view of Reynolds' sixth discourse, which was delivered on the 10th of December.

It is to be observed in this place, that one year had elapsed without his having given a discourse, which was the first omission since its commencement; but as these orations were only given on the evenings when the gold medals were presented to successful candidates as the prize, it had been previously determined in the last year, that as genius was not of quick growth it would be fully sufficient to bestow the prizes in future only once in two years, and this rule has since been regularly followed.

In this discourse, he took a view of the best principles in that part of a painter's art, called "Imitation;" and, after shewing where genius commences, and where it finds a limit, he proved that invention was acquired by being conversant with the inventions of others. To this he sub-

joined some rules for allowable imitation, marked the legal extent of borrowing, and pointed out what might fairly be collected from each specific school of the art.

As this discourse, however, was more of professional than of general import, I shall not discuss it at any length, but shall merely insert two or three passages, which strongly mark the originality of his own genius, and may be said almost to disprove the truth of his position, that Invention and Genius are the children, or at least the pupils, of Imitation.

"Genius is supposed to be a power of producing excellencies which are out of the rules of art; a power which no precepts can teach, and which no industry can acquire"—

"But the truth is, that the degree of excellence which proclaims Genius is different, in different times and places;* and what shows it to be so is, that mankind have often changed their opinion upon this matter."—

"What we now call Genius begins, not where rules, abstractedly taken, end; but where known vulgar and trite rules have no longer any place."—

"Invention is one of the greatest marks of Genius; but if we consult experience, we shall find

* The man of genius draws his art from inexhaustible nature, which gives it novelty and interest.

The man of no genius draws his art from art; hence it becomes stale, vapid, and uninteresting.

that it is by being conversant with the invention of others, that we learn to invent; as, by reading the thoughts of others, we learn to think."—

"The mind is but a barren soil; a soil which is soon exhausted, and will produce no crop, or only one, unless it be continually fertilized and enriched with foreign matter."—

Such were a few of the most striking general truths in this discourse; but the fact is, that none of his discourses possess more beauties than this one, though, for the most part, strictly of a professional nature. One anecdote related in it shall close the subject.

"I remember," said Sir Joshua, "several years ago, to have conversed at Rome with an artist of great fame throughout Europe: he was not without a considerable degree of abilities; but these abilities were by no means equal to his own opinion of them.

"From the reputation he had acquired, he too fondly concluded, that he stood in the same rank, when compared with his predecessors, as he held with regard to his miserable contemporary rivals. In conversation about some particulars of the works of Raffaelle, he seemed to have, or to affect to have, a very obscure memory of them. He told me that he had not set his foot in the Vatican for fifteen years together: that he had been in treaty to copy a capital picture of Raffaelle, but that the business had gone off; how-

ever, if the agreement had held, his copy would have greatly exceeded the original!

"The merit of this artist, however great we may suppose it, I am sure would have been far greater, and his presumption would have been far less, if he had visited the Vatican, as in reason he ought to have done, at least once every month in his life."

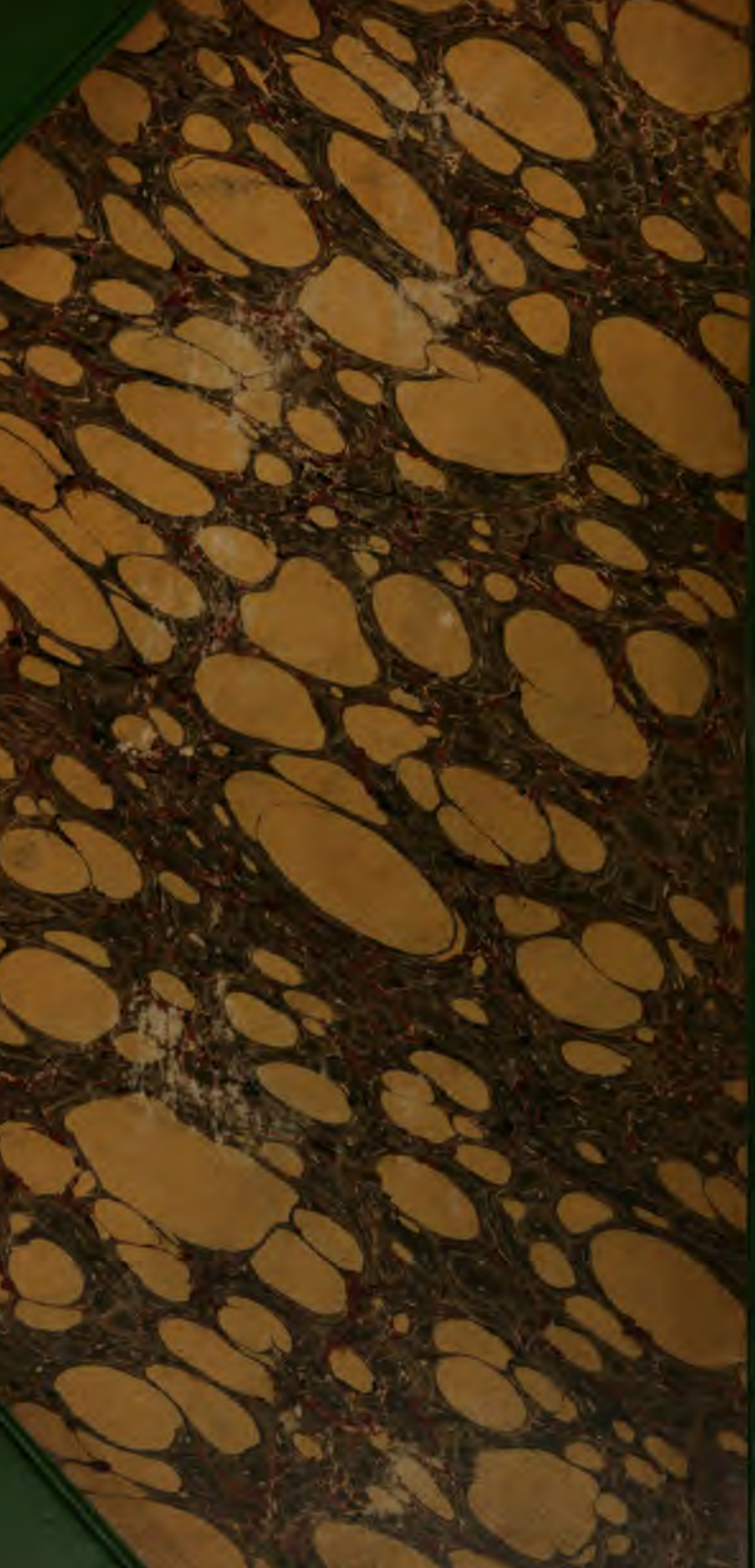
J. Gillet, Printer, Crown Court, Fleet Street, London.

ERRATA.

Volume I.

Page 16, *for* ÆTAT. 19, *read* ÆTAT. 17.
19, third line, *for* maestr, *read* master.
209, first line, *for* rat *read* art.
216, third line, *for* no *read* nor.

Volume II.

48, sixth line, *for* the ost *read* the most.
248, *for* Humphries *read* Humphry.

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